

COLLECTED POEMS

Arthur Peterson



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Book P39

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COLLECTED POEMS



THE POEMS

OF

ARTHUR PETERSON



PHILADELPHIA

1912

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BY ARTHUR PETERSON

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21

FOREWORD

There are many things which poetry now struggles to be that we do not find in the metrical writings of Arthur Peterson, which are deficient in that vagueness of conception and uncertainty of intention that is now welcomed as imagination, in the tumultuous hurry of sonorous words that is accepted as the fiery lava-flow of great inspiration, and in other Swinburnian and Meredithian characteristics; but we find in their stead a clear perception of themes which are poetical in themselves, or can be made poetical when skillfully and thoughtfully handled, and we find everywhere the sound, manly common sense which distinguished the earlier generation of American poets and imparted solidity and dignity to all they wrote.

RICHARD HENRY STODDARD.



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THE DIVAN



NOTE

The poems which make up The Divan were composed at intervals between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four, and are here printed, beginning with the earliest one, in the order in which they were written. It is the hope of the author that, if they have the faults of youth, they have the merits of youth, also.



DEDICATION

These verses, these rough records of my youth,
Its moods, its thoughts, its joys; this diary brief—
For so it might be called—of the inner life;
I dedicate to her whose loving eyes
Are still, as in my childhood's days, the stars
Which rule my heart: to her, my mother: songs
Which she has praised have not been sung in vain.

1876.



I
VENUS

1.

Beautiful Venus! Star of the morning!
Fairest of planets that dwell in the sky!
Burning so calmly, the heavens adorning,
Tenderly lookest thou down from on high!

2.

When the sun reddens the east with his fire,
Ere he darts over the earth his first beams,
Brightly thou shinest, high o'er the tall spire,
Like some sweet spirit escaped from my dreams.

3.

Queen of the heavens! All undimmed is thy glory,
But faded and gone are the stars of the night;
Fled, like the fairies of mythical story,
With the first smile of the morn's early light.

Germantown,
March 25, 1867.

THE DIVAN

II

ITALY

Enchanted Italy! Fair, sunny land!

How often, in my dreams, I've lightly strayed
Beneath thy olive-orchards' trembling shade,
And felt my brow by thy soft breezes fanned:

How often gazed upon thy magic sky,
And breathed the wild magnolia's sweet perfume,
While close at hand the aloe lifts its plume,
And orange-blossoms in the pathway lie:

And sweetly sing the birds their melodies,
Till gentle night lets fall her veil of love;
And, while the stars glow tenderly above,
The mellow moonlight quivers through the trees.

Perchance these visions may prophetic be,
And some day through thy gardens I may roam,
Beneath thy cloudless skies may make my home,
And see thy treasures, glorious Italy.

Germantown,

January, 1868.

THE DIVAN

III

WINTER

1.

The sky above is an icy blue,
Like a sapphire dome so cold and hard;
The earth with snow is clothed anew—
Last night her beauty seemed so marred
By the killing frost and the wintry blast,
And she looked so sad and desolate,
That I pitied her, but that is past,
And now she smiles in her robes of state.

2.

The icicles hang from the leafless trees,
A winter foliage rare and bright;
Fitfully tossed to and fro by the breeze,
Sparkling like gems in the sun's warm light.
No robin sings from the frozen bough
Where his nest was built in the summer time;
His northern home is deserted now,
And he carols his notes in a milder clime.

THE DIVAN

3.

The evergreen is white with snow,
White as a fruit-tree in springtime bloom;
Each bough with its burden fair bends low,
And waves like some gallant warrior's plume.
Silent the forest now and bare,
For winter rules with a rigorous hand;
Silent the circumambient air,
Silent the snow-encompassed land.

Germantown,
January, 1868.

IV

A CLOUD FANCY

1.

Three lines of breakers, swift and high,
Shaped out of yellow cloud,
Are curving in the western sky,
But I hear no surf-beat loud.

2.

I see the misty foam they toss
Pinked by the setting sun,

THE DIVAN

That long cloud stretching bright across,
Is the beach they break upon.

April, 1870.

V

ADA

I know when thou dost touch the keys,
Fair lady, with thy loving hand,
That I shall hear sweet harmonies,
Played as their makers planned.

For as the sun with beauty fills
A landscape that by night was dark,
Disclosing meads, and purple hills,
And heaven where sings the lark;

So thou, illumining some old theme
With the bright sunshine of thy soul,
Reveal'st the beauties rare which gleam
Upon the master's scroll.

Germantown,

April 14, 1870.

THE DIVAN

VI

THE MOUNTAIN

1.

The mountain heaves before me, green and gray,
And up its rugged side I force my way;
Up through the groves of hemlock and of pine,
Up to the fountains sweet and crystalline
Whence leap the garrulous streams which round me
twine;
Up to the floods of pure, untainted air,
Up to the stony summit, cold and bare.
Here, where the mountain lifts its craggy spire,
My eager-climbing feet can push no higher.
And once again I stand upon the peak,
And joy to hear the sky-born eagle shriek;
And, gazing earthward from my airy height,
Behold the prospect with dilated sight.
Majestic mountains, with their peaks of gray—
Sky-cutting pinnacles that, glancing down,
Capture the first long sunbeam of the day,
And gird it round their foreheads for a crown.
Broad forests, camped upon the mountain-side
Like armies; o'er whose tops the breezes glide,

THE DIVAN

And wave the upshooting hemlocks' tufts of green
Like knightly plumes before the battle seen.
Loud, foaming torrents, that adown the steep
And sharpened ledges like wild mustangs leap.
Beneath, the plain; and far off the white line
Of ocean, curving to the level shore;
Beyond the tranquil-swelling waters shine,
And sunbeams flit about their azure floor.

2.

O then, as I stand silent there among
Those giant powers that all around me throng,
A change comes o'er my being; mind and heart
Seem kin to them, and in their life take part.
I yield myself unto their welcoming grasp
E'en as the brooklet to the river's clasp,
Glad to forbear men's presence for a day
To mingle with such potentates as they.
My spirit shares this mountain-monarch's pride,
I stand, too, with the forest on his side,
Guarding, with pine-tree spears, his royal head
From the rude worldling's sacrilegious tread.
And foster-brothers seem the wind and rain
Descending, from their cloud-home, to the plain.

THE DIVAN

3.

Ye mighty spirits of the earth and air!
How glorious to be one with you, to share
Your beauty vast and elemental strength!
So do I now, erect upon a cone
Of this huge pyramid which lifts its length
From earth to heaven. Here, from the world, alone,
I love to come, and all forget life's pain
Within this loftier sphere where ye do reign.

April, 1870.

VII

THE FORGET-ME-NOT

Ada, do you remember that bright day
When, through the green glades of the quiet wood,
We boys and girls went laughing on our way,
Over the brook, to where the beech-trees stood?

Not many months ago it was, and June
Lavished her royal beauty everywhere;
The wood-thrush sang his wildest, sweetest tune,
And we were happy as the day was fair.

THE DIVAN

And in that sloping meadow, near the brook,
You picked for me a gentle little flower;
The emblem of fidelity I took,
Both smiled, and I have kept it till this hour.

Yes, though 'tis faded now, though its soft blue
Has lost the freshness which it once possessed,
Yet your fair hand has given the flower a hue
Far lovelier, dear, than when it bloomed unpressed.

It breathes a fragrance which, like some old tune,
Calls up delicious memories of the spot
Where, on that pleasant summer afternoon,
You gave to me a sweet forget-me-not.

Germantown,
July 18, 1870.

VIII

THE POND

There is, upon my homeward walk, a place
Where I must always stop; a deep, still pond,
From whose green banks the katydids respond,
With their sharp treble, to the bull-frogs' bass.

THE DIVAN

O beautiful the spot where the wild stream,
Merged in these calmer waters, finds its end!
Here, in the shadowy eve, the willows bend
In moveless droopings, ghostly as a dream.
Not far off stands a mill among the trees,
(Of laboring strength with loveliness the type)
And ofttimes have I watched, lying at mine ease,
The white steam curling from the iron pipe,
Unfolding its thin substance to the air,
Like some tall, graceful plant, up-springing there.
Germantown,
September, 1870.

IX

HALLOWEEN

Out I went into the meadow,
Where the moon was shining brightly,
And the oak-tree's lengthening shadows
On the sloping sward did lean;
For I longed to see the goblins,
And the dainty-footed fairies,
And the gnomes, who dwell in caverns,
But come forth on Halloween.

THE DIVAN

“All the spirits, good and evil,
Fay and pixie, witch and wizard,
On this night will sure be stirring,”
Thought I, as I walked along;
“And if Puck, the merry wanderer,
Or her majesty, Titania,
Or that Mab who teases housewives
If their housewifery be wrong,

Should but condescend to meet me”—
But my thoughts took sudden parting,
For I saw, a few feet from me,
Standing in the moonlight there,
A quaint, roguish little figure,
And I knew 'twas Puck, the trickster,
By the twinkle of his bright eyes
Underneath his shaggy hair.

Yet I felt no fear of Robin,
Salutation brief he uttered,
Laughed and touched me on the shoulder,
And we lightly walked away;
And I found that I was smaller,
For the grasses brushed my elbows,

THE DIVAN

And the asters seemed like oak-trees,
With their trunks so tall and gray.

Swiftly as the wind we traveled,
Till we came unto a garden,
Bright within a gloomy forest,
Like a gem within the mine;
And I saw, as we grew nearer,
That the flowers so blue and golden
Were but little men and women,
Who amongst the green did shine.

But 'twas marvelous the resemblance
Their bright figures bore to blossoms,
As they smiled, and danced, and courtesied,
Clad in yellow, pink and blue;
That fair dame, my eyes were certain,
Who among them moved so proudly,
Was my moss-rose, while her ear-rings
Sparkled like the morning dew.

Here, too, danced my pinks and pansies,
Smiling, gayly, as they used to
When, like beaux bedecked and merry,

THE DIVAN

They disported in the sun;
There, with meek eyes, walked a lily,
While the violets and snow-drops
Tripped it with the lordly tulips:
Truant blossoms, every one.

Then spoke Robin to me, wondering:
“These blithe fairies are the spirits
Of the flowers which all the summer
Bloom beneath its tender sky;
When they feel the frosty fingers
Of the autumn closing round them,
They forsake their earthborn dwellings,
Which to earth return and die,

“As befits things which are mortal.
But these spirits, who are deathless,
Care not for the frosty autumn,
Nor the winter long and keen;
But, from field, and wood, and garden,
When their summer’s tasks are finished,
Gather here for dance and music,
As of old, on Halloween.”

THE DIVAN

Long, with Puck, I watched the revels,
Till the gray light of the morning
Dimmed the luster of Orion,
Starry sentry overhead;
And the fairies, at that warning,
Ceased their riot, and the brightness
Faded from the lonely forest,
And I knew that they had fled.

Ah, it ne'er can be forgotten,
This strange night I learned the secret—
That within each flower a busy
Fairy lives and works unseen.
Seldom is 't to mortals granted
To behold the elves and pixies,
To behold the merry spirits,
Who come forth on Halloween.

November, 1870.

THE DIVAN

X

AT THE PIANO

Beneath her touch the keys take life,
And carol sweetly as a bird
At dawn, before the toil and strife
Of day are heard;

Then, changing, chant a tender song
And potent; so a syren's strain
Sounds to his ears who, sea-tossed long,
Sights land again.

Spell-bound I stand; her hand, her arm,
Her lovely face are all I see;
Her beauty and her music charm
And capture me.

November, 1870.

THE DIVAN

XI

ONE NIGHT

O many a fairer, brighter face
Than thine shone 'mid the dance,
And many a form of maiden grace
Challenged my careless glance;
But though their beauty I could see,
My heart allowed no thrall,
Thy witching presence was to me
Far sweeter than them all!

I know not why it was, unless
Thou wast so sweet and good,
And on thy face was the impress
Of many a gentle mood;
But deep within my heart that night
A new life 'gan to move—
Thou wast the first that touched aright
The mystic chords of love!

December, 1870.

THE DIVAN

XII

EROS

O love, I know not what thou art,
Or why thou camest to my heart,
Or where is set the golden zone
From which thy wondrous wings have flown.
I only know that loftier thought,
Diviner joy, thine advent brought;
That in this world a thing more sweet,
From birth to death, I ne'er shall meet.
My brightest dreams of what would be
When thou upon my life shouldst rise,
Were as art's painted imagery
To the deep fire of morning skies:
Clear-eyed, I now begin to see
What men have meant by Paradise.

Immortal Eros, who for me
Hast thrown the gates of Eden free;
Who, like a herald of the sky,
Hast brought this glory from on high;
What can I ask thee, but that thou

THE DIVAN

Wilt guide me evermore, as now;
What can I promise, but that I
Will follow, trusting perfectly;
Sure, by this joy thine advent brings,
The glitter of thy golden wings
Leads upward to celestial things!

December, 1870.

XIII

THE TALISMAN

Ah surely lovers foolish are—
Why should I keep this little bead?
Though it has lain upon her breast,
What can it bring me that I need?

I held it then with musing hand—
A curious bead of scented wood;
But even as rose my words I felt
The presence of a spirit good.

I saw those dear eyes on me turned,
I heard again that sweet voice teach me;
My angel! who, from far or near,
At touch of this doth fly to reach me.

THE DIVAN

O science teaches wrong that scorns
Entirely magic rune and charm;
This talisman of mine shall save
My inner life from many a harm!

December, 1870.

XIV

THE SHORTEST DAY

O men call this the shortest day
The rolling year has seen;
But, darling, with thee far away,
To me, alone, it's been
The longest day
That ever lay
Upon my heart and brain.
So long and drear;
Thou wast not here;
O come to me again!

But backward in the golden June,
When the long days are clearest,
Came one which faded all too soon
From thee and me, my dearest.

THE DIVAN

Ah hours so sweet
Are always fleet
To sink into the night;
On that fair day
We two did stray
Into Love's land of light!

December, 1870.

XV

BROKEN LOVE

I look upon thy face, and reason says
It is the same;
I hear thy voice; and, just as others do,
I speak thy name.
So cold am I; (O love where hast thou flown
That lit my heart?)
So calm am I; no more thy touch doth make
My life-blood start
To serve thee. Thou hast driven sweet love away.
Above thy head
No longer floats the glory of his wings.
Eros has fled.

January, 1871.

THE DIVAN

XVI

THE TEMPLE OF NATURE

1.

In the clear air of field and wood,
In the tall mountain's solitude,
God speaketh to the willing mood.
Go forth, and, in that lonelier hour,
Thou shalt be conscious of a power
Which lives within the mountain breeze,
And broods above the forest's trees,
And which, through forms of earth and sky,
Shall lift thee, by its sympathy,
So far above the thoughts that wound
Thy commoner nature into strife,
That thou, in that serener life,
Shalt deem thou treadest holy ground.
And thou shalt learn a lesson new—
That what thy spirit says is true.
That the exulting hills, which rear
Their heads above the storm-clouds' reach,
Are to the airs of Heaven more near
Than deftly-measured angles teach;

THE DIVAN

That the faint wood-path oft leads on
To shrines where dwells the Holy One;
That oft, too, eve's transfigured skies
Reflect the shapes of Paradise.
What earth-born or polluting thought
Can live before the mountain wind?
What sad doubts but must come to naught
When thou, at midnight's hour, dost find
The message which the stars have brought?
A willow waving in the sun
O'er thy distress hath victory won;
And when the hermit pine-tree flings
His fingers o'er the tuneful strings
And, with a solemn sweetness, sings,
The demons of the world must flee,
Exorcised by his psalmody.

2.

Seldom is born the mystic seer
Within the city's atmosphere;
Not often from its smoke and slime
Rise up the men who lead their time—
The spirits fearless and sublime
Whom God has given unto man,

THE DIVAN

Expounders of His perfect plan—
Bright suns round whom the centuries
Revolve like planets in the skies;
Centers of systems which still roll,
Types of the many-sided soul.
Far from the fret of town and mart,
Poet and prophet dwell apart.
Out from the sacred solitude
Of Indian forests came the Buddh;
Beside the Sutlej, wild and strong,
Rose up, in that rude, primal tongue,
The bright-haired Aryan prophet's song;
On Hara's mount Mohammed heard
Alkoran's trump-delivered word;
And in the desert's twilight hush
The Lord spoke from the burning bush
To him who, learned in Egypt's lore,
Led Israel forth from Egypt's shore.

3.

Go forth into the air, the word
Of God upon its wings is borne,
And, in the ever-sacred morn,
Thou, in thy solitude, shalt hear

THE DIVAN

What the old saints and sages heard.
And, tranced in that diviner sphere,
If thou dost list on bended knee,
If thou dost heed most reverently,
Perchance still further shalt thou see
Than they into the mystery.
Thyself may be the messenger
Whom God shall choose new truth to bear,
Thyself shalt share the ecstasy,
Thyself mankind shalt glorify,
Thyself shalt light the century!

January, 1871.

XVII

SPRING

Already, while the snow is on the ground,
All things do tell us of the coming spring;
The sun in widening circles treads his round,
And yesterday I heard a robin sing
From leafless boughs, cold for his daring wing.
A softer blue doth fill the morning sky,
And south winds often seem to bring the summer nigh.

THE DIVAN

And strong as run the torrents from the hills
The new life through our veins doth make its way,
And many a thought of high performance fills
His brain who long hath waited for his day;
To him the voice of Spring doth seem to say—
Now shall thy song rise from the winter's strife,
And with the swelling year shall grow and form its
life.

Germantown,

February 19, 1871.

XVIII

LOVE'S IMPATIENCE

How can I wait till these long days are past
Before I rest my eyes on thy dear face!
Where art thou, love? O I would follow fast
If but some power would guide me to the place!
Canst thou not tell me by some spirit's grace?
For surely there are spirits, as of old,
Who joy love's glowing message to unfold.

THE DIVAN

Speak but my name, and the kind breeze will bear
The sweet sound, like a perfume, through the space;
And I shall wander forth, knowing not where,
But surely shall I come unto the place
Where thou dost stand, and gaze into thy face.
For if thou lovest me as I love thee,
These unseen powers our friends will always be.
April, 1871.

XIX

THE DAFFODIL

When the southern breezes blow,
How doth melt the crusted snow;
Opens wide the daffodil,
Standing stately on the hill;
In it sweetest meanings lie,
Flower of love and chivalry;
For the good thou hast done me,
This the flower I give to thee!

THE DIVAN

Southern winds bring skies of blue,
From the south thou camest too,
And thy influence, warm and sweet,
Like the first bright April heat,
Melted all my nature's crust,
Bitterness and cold distrust.
Then upsprung the daffodil,
Flower that thinks of no one ill,
Emblem of a nobler mood,
Faith in—love for—womanhood.
This, which now I give to thee,
Thy own sunshine woke in me,
Flower of love and chivalry!

April, 1871.

THE DIVAN

XX

SPRING SONG

Thou and spring together came,
And if spring brought many a flower,
'Neath the sunshine of thy name,
'Neath thy sweet life-giving power,
Dormant hearts sprang into flame;
To their brightness flowers were tame.

Thou wast greater, then, than spring
In the glory of thy deed,
And the flowers which thou didst bring
Wind nor winter do not heed;
Hearts will bloom and love will sing,
When lies dead May's offering.

April, 1871.

THE DIVAN

XXI

LOVE OF WOMAN

O love, when thou dost come into my heart,
 (E'en though it be but short and changeful love,)
 A feeling of good-will toward all who move
Seems of thy joy an ever-present part.
Therefore my thought hath often pictured thee
 As some bright angel, who dost see how hard
 It is for men to live pure and unmarred,
To climb the heights their aspirations see,
And so dost come down with thy glorious lamp
 And set it in our hearts, when straight-way flee
All evil impulses we could not tramp
 Beneath our feet while yet we knew not thee.
For love of woman is the golden door
Through which we pass and long to sin no more.

April, 1871.

THE DIVAN

XXII

THE ROBIN

Once more, O robin, from the boughs of May,
Thou singest in the evening and the morn;
I hear thy vesper hymn at close of day,
And matins music when, like seraph borne
On high, thou hail'st the bright east with thy horn:
Lying at dawn, asleep half, half awake,
Part of my dreams thy carol seems to break.

Thou mouth-piece of the young and eager spring,
Dear memories from thy song do ever flow;
Thy voice doth touch in me a tender string
Of thought, which winds back to the long ago—
Which through that golden land doth wander slow:
Ah little dost thou think, who sing'st so free,
The sweet dreams which thy music brings to me.

May, 1871.

THE DIVAN

XXIII

RECOGNIZED

Darling, my darling, of maidens the fairest,
Mine, though thy lips never spoke unto me,
Mine, though I know not the name which thou bearest,
How can I go like a stranger from thee?
Go, when my heart to thy beauty is kneeling,
Go, when thy dark eyes to me are revealing
Passion, God-given, which spurneth concealing,
Darling, my darling!

False seems the custom which holds us apart, love,
Could we but trust to the spirit alone,
Soon would thy golden head rest on my heart, love,
Soon would my burning lips cling to thine own.
For O thou art mine by the Heaven's decreeing,
Yes, thou art mine by my soul's divine seeing,
Thou couldst fulfill the deep hopes of my being,
Darling, my darling!

Day after day, all expectant, I've sought thee,
Somewhere, I knew, watched my beautiful one;

THE DIVAN

Night after night have the dream-angels brought thee
In spirit to help me, and beckon me on.
Now, when I've found thee at last, ne'er to doubt thee,
Now, when my arms should be folded about thee,
Borne back by fate I must go on without thee,
Darling, my darling!

June, 1871.

XXIV

LOVE AT SIGHT

No longer need his soul for beauty seek—
How wondrous fair her skin, her features' mold,
The lily hand which lay upon her cheek,
The bright hair backward rolled!

A spirit seemed she, flown within his ken,
And in his heart a mighty love upsprung;
He could have clasped her to his bosom then,
Aside all custom flung.

And she, who felt the fire of his long gaze
Fall on her soul like sunrise on the sea,

THE DIVAN

Turned her lit eyes, and met his own half-ways,
And knew that it was he.

June, 1871.

XXV

ONE OF EARTH'S ANGELS

Now art thou beautiful, thou child of light!

Now with thy hair tossed back and figure still;
I drink thy beauty with a raptured sight—

I drink till soul and senses it doth fill;
O do not move, but sit forever so,
And let me gaze, and never, never go!

So bright, bright as the morn, thou breathest there;

Unconscious as the rose, or golden-rod,
How things so beautiful do upward bear

The soul into the very airs of God!
O angel golden-haired, unknown to thee,
Thy presence to such heights hath lifted me!

July, 1871.

THE DIVAN

XXVI

A SKETCH IN COLORS

I walked along the road as night came down,
A sunset dyed the sky upon my right,
And on the left a round moon met my sight—
A bright, fair moon; not pale, like Dian's gown,
But silvery, shining yellow; a joyous moon;
And as it lay upon the dark blue sky
It almost seemed to glitter when the eye
Turned suddenly upon it—softening soon.
The sunset on my right was beautiful!

Well up in the sky a wash of faintest green;
Below, a pale soft yellow could be seen,
Which fed a band of orange deep and dull;
And fields of rich vermilion darkened still
Into one strong red line which rimmed the hill.

Germantown, Monday Evening,
December 25, 1871.

THE DIVAN

XXVII

LATE AFTERNOON IN DECEMBER

The temperate air is filled with a gray mist,
Which thickens to a dense cloud when the eye
To make out forms of distant things doth try,
And whose close fold the sunbeams doth resist.
The ground is soaked and darkened with the rain,
And in the road slow carriage wheels have rolled
Deep ruts, that little pools of water hold,
And in the path my steps leave footprints plain.
In the sleeping trees no life is visible;
And, with this ghostly mist wrapped all around
Their branches, fancy makes them seem as bound
In some far northern land by wizard's spell—
Some land into whose wastes I enter now,
And feel the same weird power to which they bow.

*Germantown, Sunday Evening,
December 31, 1871.*

THE DIVAN

XXVIII

IN YOUTH

Perhaps, through life, 'twill not be always so—

But now, in my youth, the world seems to abound

With things so beautiful that I feel crowned,

At times, with joy as great as Heaven can know.

Ay, there is very blackness oft to fight:

But at the sight of sunrise bright and strong;

Or sound of some sweet strain of waltz or song

Made precious by a ball-room's wild delight;

Or when I watch, with eyes that may seem bold,

The passing of fair women in the street,

Two arm in arm, perhaps, with cheeks that meet

The air and flush, and tresses brown or gold;

My soul springs upward with such ecstasy,

I wonder that so much of joy can be.

January, 1872.

THE DIVAN

XXIX

TO THE WEST WIND

O wind of the West, thou art the one I need!
Thou who art strong with sweeping sky-bound
 plains,
And vital with the spirit of great chains
Of mountains, let me of thy nature feed!
Beneath these crystal heavens now let me stand,
And drink thy life, and be a child of thee;
As are the prairies—to thy bounty free;
As are the forests—nourished by thy hand.
Strong as the lusty sap make thou my blood's
Red stream to run, unchecked by stress or wear;
And like the march of ocean's salty floods
Let my verse be, when they thy signal hear.
Give me thy own clear life within my brain,
And sense of boundless power in every vein!

January, 1872.

THE DIVAN

XXX

AFTER THE THEATER

(To Miss Amy Roselle as Ada Ingot. E. A. Sothern as David Garrick.)

All day the spell of that dear play has lain
Upon me; and my thoughts, unceasingly,
Dream round its various happenings and round
thee,

Who didst so fascinate my heart and brain.
I see thee standing now as thou didst stand
Last night upon the stage; thy high, sweet face
Uplifted to thy lover's, and the grace
Of thy young figure, circled by his hand,
Gowned in deep red, which seemed sad with thy sor-
row:

And round the gown, and o'er the red, there swept
A veil of black, whose gathered meshes crept
Up to thy curving throat, and there did borrow
The clasp of one white hand: while, girlishly-fair,
Waved, over all, thy yellow English hair.

Philadelphia,

February 3, 1872.

THE DIVAN

XXXI

BEAUTY

The whole round of the year is filled—is built
With beauty, but so few have eyes to see
Its light in all the vast variety
Of appearance. Only at times when there is spilt
Right down upon their souls some showy birth
Of nature—moonlit sea—or sunset when
'Tis rich with cloudlets—are the great levels of men
Made conscious of this element on earth.
The seasons' common, unobtrusive phases,
The gentle days which die in temperate light,
The multitudes of mornings which spring raises,
Far sweeter that they do not 'maze the sight,
Move regularly onward, year by year,
Past souls unconscious of the wealth they bear.

February, 1872.

THE DIVAN

XXXII

MISS NEILSON AS JULIET

(On the Balcony)

Sweet face, uplifted to the star-lit sky,
So still, so white upon the dusky air,
Why cam'st thou here? And eyes of Italy,
What are the thoughts that in your depths ye bear?

Sweet face, so like the dream-love we have known,
So like the visioned Juliet of our hearts,
Thou seem'st to shine for each of us, alone,
From each to ask that trust which never parts.

We leave the glare of gas, the crowd, the talk;
We fly back through the years,—beyond the sea;
Led by the moon where gentle breezes walk
Across this southern land, how daintily!

And Romeos are we all. O lady fair,
On this one night 'tis we who leap the wall;

THE DIVAN

Spy thy white presence, like a saint in air,
And hear thy voice, which is our passion's call!

Philadelphia,

January 15, 1873.

XXXIII

BACCHANALIAN SONG

1.

Fill up your cups, drink down your wine,
To the toast which now I'm giving—
The love of youth! The thing divine
Which makes life worth the living!
These maids so bright,
These eyes that light,
Aye, they're worth all your striving!

2.

What care we for the world's great work?
For wealth which finds men old?
Fair lady's lips we never shirk,
Sweet hair that doth enfold.

THE DIVAN

These yellow locks,
This heart that rocks,
Aye, they're worth all your gold!

January, 1873.

XXXIV

THE CRICKET-FIELD AT GERMAN-TOWN

The field—the fair and level green
Which stretches off and all around;
The crowd, dark-circling round the ground;
The flags which overhead are seen!
High hauled into the noonday air
The red cloud of great England's love;
Beyond, with star-lit azure square,
And stripes of white and crimson wove,
Our standard, as a sunrise bright;
About the field, some near, some far,
White figures stand or run, and are
Now cheered, now watched with anxious sight.

I lie beneath the shade of trees,
An idler in this sportful fray;

THE DIVAN

Out in the sun the players play,
And lift their caps to feel the breeze.
My eyes go up to faces fair
Which look from under flags that flame
Afront the gay pavilion's stair,
Sweet queens who sit above the game.
A profile like a dream of Greece,
With hair in twinings statuesque;
A head like one which from the desk
Of Phidias might have gazed in peace.
Far up the rows soft colors warm
The air about a May-day face;
Gaily the half-uncovered arm
Waves the light fan which shares its grace.
And near, in white, with northern hair,
Pale-yellow, parted low upon
A forehead exquisite, is one
For whom a man thinks he could bear
Death, torture: whose sweet girlhood seems
An Eden life, of some fair place
Far off, some garden of his dreams:
His blood, ere harm to her young face.

THE DIVAN

These ladies, lovelier than the morn
Of some rich-hearted day in June,
Whose eyes are love, whose voices tune;
These banners, which the field adorn;
This music, sweetening all the air,
And making fairy-land below;
This luxury, this kingly show—
Is it a dream of times that bear
The fame of Arthur on their front?
Is it the field of Camelot,
The glory of a joust, the hunt
For ladies' smiles through battle hot?

A shout from out the field—I lift
Myself from dreams of a far then
Into this waning day again.
Across the green begins to drift
The breaking crowd—the game is done.
I see bright, ladies' colors flit;
I see the splendor in the sun
Of flags of royal dyeings knit;
I hear a knightly march begun,
As when a victory hath lit!

June, 1873.

THE DIVAN

XXXV

GOOD-BY

Ah yes, sweet love, look out, look up,
It is the dreary air of morn,
Too chill for this dress thou hast worn
For lighted rooms, and dance, and cup:
It is the star which leads the day,
It is the day low in the east,
O darling, I can never say
Those words to thee and then have ceased—
Good-by, good-by!

A light is dim within thy room,
Its air is sweet and warm with thee,
Why came we out here where the sea
Can break our hearts with that dread boom?
Thy face is pale that leans on me,
Lifted against the morning star;
Thy white arms hold me tremblingly
From speech that bears me from them far—
Good-by, good-by!

THE DIVAN

A wind comes inland through the dark,
Damp, chill from off the tossing waves,
From watery leagues 'neath which the graves
Of men are made, and have no mark.
Thy arms draw tighter round my neck,
I kiss thy face that lifts to me,
Thy lips that quiver, dreaming wreck,
Good-by, my own, God cherish thee—
Good-by, good-by!

XXXVI

SUMMER EVENING

1.

A night of June, the stars were bright,
And all the air was warm and soft,
And round about us floated oft
Some sweet perfume, and then took flight.
Your dress was some pale summer stuff,
Its light was all we cared to have,
I at your feet, and near enough
Sitting to feel your fan's slow wave.

THE DIVAN

2.

Of ghosts we talked, told mystic tales
Which made both turn, almost afraid,
And peer into the woodbine's shade,
Moved to and fro by gentle gales.
In the late evening, growing still
At last, you gazed long at the stars,
And I at your fair face, until
Midnight struck through the lattice-bars.

*Pomona, Germantown,
July, 1873.*

XXXVII

KITTY

A little lake, whose waters lay
Amongst green lawns, and stately trees,
Where sounded, on that August day,
The thrush's liquid melodies.
Slow drifted we about the isles,
And talked and laughed—it seemed so pleasant;
Say, was it but the day's rare wiles,
Or that your own fair self was present
To charm me, Kitty?

THE DIVAN

Willows around the rim did stand,
Your hair caught in their dreaming branches;
A tale came to me of that land
Beyond the land of avalanches;
A German tale, of princess bright
Caught in a famed enchanter's toils,
And helpless, till a wandering knight
With sword and steed the wizard foils,
And rescues Kitty.

The fairy-land-like afternoon
Grew paler with the breath of night;
Cool-shadowed was the lakelet soon,
Though on fair slopes still lay the light.
Back glided toward the bank our boat,
Forth stepped its nymph in summery white.
Have you forgot those hours afloat,
The lake, the lawns of which I write
These verses, Kitty?

*Pomona, Germantown,
August, 1873.*

THE DIVAN

XXXVIII

REVERIES

The early autumn night descends; the storm
Rages outdoors; within my room I sit,
And listen to wild September's equinox.

Then from our parlor, where my sister sings,
Music comes to my ears. What summer night
Was it, long since, when first I heard that song?

Tears fill my eyes. The voice which caroled once
Those notes, now sings no more for me; the lips
Which once I kissed, another kisses now.

XXXIX

A GERMANTOWN GRAVEYARD

The aster and the golden-rod
Which, in October's prime, did fill
The road-side when I hither trod,
Have faded from each vale and hill.

THE DIVAN

The sunset earlier paints the stock
Of upland oak than once it could;
The vine is red about the rock,
Within the silent wood.

How lonely, in these somber eves
Of autumn, seems this ancient ground;
O'er grave and tomb the withered leaves
Have fallen from trees which stand around;
Low head-stones, leaning different ways,
Bear epitaphs of long-past years;
Here rose the Mystic's hymn of praise,
And fell his pious tears.

XL

DECEMBER

The sunsets burn and die,
The moon comes up the sky,
The white nights brood upon the closing year;
At this window thou didst stand
Where now within my hand
I lay my face, and know thou art not here.

THE DIVAN

What flowers born of the south,
With white or crimson mouth,
Blow round thee through these hours and never die?
What shadows tropical
About thy chamber fall,
My own, in that far land where thou dost lie?

Thou star! as do arise
A mystic's raptured eyes
To some fair planet, his hereafter place,
So, rising from these drear
Last midnights of the year,
My spirit seeks the heaven of thy sweet face!

December, 1873.

XLI

HELEN

Thy face, with drowsy eyes
That dream the dawn of love—
Thy yellow hair above—
The exquisite surprise
Of head so naiad-bright—
How beautiful the sight!

THE DIVAN

Sweet music fills my ears,
The dance is all around,
Amidst the light and sound
Thy voice my spirit hears,
Sweeter than any tune
Of viol and bassoon.

It is the light divine
Of love within our hearts
That gives us dreams—that parts
From the world thy soul and mine;
That almost maketh me,
Helen, to worship thee.

March, 1874.

XLII

PARTING

1.

The blue within her eyes was dim,
She turned her pale face from the sea,
She gave her gentle form to him,
“O sweet, remember me!”

THE DIVAN

That upturned face he bent above,
He looked, he kissed, he spoke his love,
“Light of my life, where’er I rove,
I pray, I fight for thee!”

2.

Across the sand, within the wave,
His galleys waited for their lord—
His berserkers, so strong and brave,
Masters of spear and sword.
The never-ending ocean washed
Each prow fantastic where it flashed,
With shout and song his galleys dashed
Exulting out the fiord.

March, 1874.

XLIII

SONG

I walk by night along the lanes;
The planets rise and sink to rest;
O like some star which never wanes
Thy face shines down upon my breast!

THE DIVAN

Though sea and land between us lie,
The spirit knows nor bar nor bound:
Can I not, in the midnight sky,
Behold the distant worlds swing round?
So, from this roadway, where my feet
In dusky spaces tread the earth,
I see thee, an immortal sweet,
Above a son of mortal birth.

Thy face it is that lights my dreams;
Thy hand it is that leads me on;
Athwart my vision ever gleams
A time when I thy smile have won.
Then with the glory round my brow,
That bards of Greece and Rome have worn,
Before my coming thou shalt bow
Whose heart hath slain men with its scorn.
Like Memnon, from the Egyptian night
Awakened by the glimmering sun,
So shall thy blood, from grave to bright,
In streams of unknown music run.

THE DIVAN

XLIV

ANTONY IN EGYPT

Sweet, how can I leave this land
Which thou rulest with thy wand?
This unholy land, which yet
Is so thick with pleasures set
That the glittering hills of Rome
Cannot draw thy captive home.
O these sweet Egyptian nights!
O these stars, that are but lights
For love's sighs or raillery!
O these perfumed hours that flee!
Royal sorceress, by what art
Dost thou hold my soldier's heart?

To the mountains of the north
March the Roman legions forth;
Gold against their snowy line,
Bright the Roman eagles shine.
But the glitter of the spear
Cannot rouse me like thy tear;
And the tumult of the fight

THE DIVAN

Has no charm like this sweet night.
Let the wild barbarians swarm,
They but nerve the Roman arm;
In the forests of the Gaul
Fast their bearded heads shall fall;
By the altars of their gods
Heaped shall be the burial-clods;
For the Roman sword hath met
Hand to parry it never yet.
But for me thy magic face;
And the arts which give thee grace;
And the jewels thou dost wear,
Stars, upon thy midnight hair.

Thou art more to me than fame;
Can I call thee dearer name?
Midst the palaces of Rome,
Where proud Cæsar has his home,
And the legions of the world,
With their northern banners furled,
Or their tropic marches done,
Halt beneath a victor's sun;
There my name shall be a sneer,
Hateful to a soldier's ear;

THE DIVAN

There the wreath-crowned conqueror,
Shall I triumph never more.

October, 1875.

XLV

DE PROFUNDIS

Beloved, when I hear
Thy voice, and feel thee near,
Strong grows my soul and clear.
I look from my wild ways,
And dream of nobler days.
O like an angel bright
Unto my erring sight,
Thou reachest forth thy hand,
Bidding me rise, and stand
Beside thee in that land
Where love doth rule and right:
Helping me from the night!

Alone, I miss the path.
The woods of sin and wrath
Lie round me, black and deep;
The winds of passion sweep;

THE DIVAN

My steps I cannot keep.
Lo, in the heavens, a star,
I see thee shine afar.
Thou light'st me on my way;
And that my footsteps may
Follow that light I pray!

XLVI

MOUNT VERNON

Still stands the mansion; still before it sweeps
The broad Potomac. As, in days of eld,
This noble spectacle his eyes beheld,
So do mine now; Nature her beauty keeps.
But he is gone; the good, the wise, the great.
As o'er the hill, and past the simple tomb,
And through the house I wander, room by room,
Thoughts of that life heroic congregate.
Here, till his country called, he dwelt, content;
Then, like the Roman, chose a soldier's lot;
Brought peace unto a land by discord rent;
And, dying, left a name without a blot.
Beloved he lived, and, ending life's brief span,
Beloved he died, at peace with God and man.

THE DIVAN

XLVII

GIROFLÉ-GIROFLA

The violinist draws his bow,
The harper touches string,
And from the narrow court below
Sweet music now takes wing.

A merry tune, a gay refrain,
A song of youth and love,
Yet in my heart there comes a pain,
And tears begin to move.

It is the tune her fingers played
Far in the days gone by;
It seems to me it cannot fade
From memory till I die.

February, 1876.

THE DIVAN

L' ENVOI

Go forth, my prentice-book, and if
Men, in your simple meters, mark
Not the proud flight of ocean-bark,
But dallyings of some pleasure-skiff,

What matter? On thy leaves, Divan,
In golden adolescent days,
A minne-singer wrote his lays,
Before life's battle-work began.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN



NOTE

The first permanent settlement upon the banks of the Delaware was made, as is well known, by the Swedes; and the whole country from the falls of the river (where now stands Trenton) to the capes was originally called New-Sweden. From the landing of Peter Minuit, in 1638, down to the time of William Penn (a period of nearly half a century) the language and customs of Sweden held almost exclusive sway along the Delaware. Now, save the old churches at Philadelphia and Wilmington, and the Swedish names which still dot the chart of the river, scarcely anything remains to tell the modern inquirer of a time which has almost escaped the pen of the legendary.

Although the last four of these poems treat of events which occurred after the close of the Swedish dominion, and during the rule of the English, it has not seemed inappropriate to include them under one head with the others.



DEDICATION

These to my father's memory, since
He held them best of all my lays,
I dedicate: these rhymes of days
Whose hero was the doughty Printz;

When on this shore the Northmen dwelt,
And in these streams their shallops laved,
While yet the primeval forest waved,
And ere the form of Penn here knelt.

Farewell, New-Sweden, quaint, to thee!
Forerunner of that city fair
Before whose gates the Delaware
Rolls his dark waters to the sea.

Farewell, ye children of the North!
Forgotten are those earlier days,
And few the pens, like mine, to praise
Your simple lives, your pious worth.



PROLOGUE

I sing a time when o'er this region waved
The flag of Sweden; when the Delaware's flood
Was yet unnamed by English tongue; when dwelt
By many a creek, on many a sunny knoll,
The fair-haired, sturdy children of the north.

Two hundred years, and more, have come and gone
Since on this strand, with banners waving bright,
Fair Scandia set her foot. What shapes arise
From out the past, and gather round me! What
Forgotten sounds accost my ear! I see
The log-built fort on Tinicum, the flag
Which hangs so drowsily in the summer air,
The sentries pacing to and fro, the flash
Of bayonets in the sun. I see the quaint
Costumes of Sweden as, on Sabbath days,
The people gather to the church: a tongue
Unknown by us they speak. Ah, like a dream,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Useless to call to mind, that simpler time
To the keen race which treads our streets to-day.

These half-forgotten stories, culled with love
From books scarce-known, take, you who care to read.
1876.

I

THE COMING OF PRINTZ

John Printz, a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Swedish Army, (afterwards a General) was the ablest of the Governors of New-Sweden; and is altogether the most conspicuous figure in the history of the colony. During his administration (1643-1653) the settlement was in its most flourishing condition. Though haughty and domineering in his relations with the Dutch, his conduct toward the Indians was always of the most friendly character. In remuneration for his long and excellent services to the crown of Sweden, the Island of Tinicum, in the Delaware, was granted to him and his heirs; but he tired of the uneventful life of a colony; and, in 1653, returned to the mother country.

What flag is that? What ships are they
Which round Henlopen's cape,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

And o'er the blue waves of the bay,
Their gallant courses shape?
'Tis warlike Sweden's banner bright;
And hers these vessels three,
Which long have stretched their wings in flight,
"Fame," "Swan," and "Charity."
Behind the old world looms in dreams,
The new world lies before,
A land like Paradise it seems
To Printz, the governor.

A soldier he, with visage stern,
And heart that knows not fear;
He fights where'er his colors burn,
For queen and country dear.
The light of seas is in his eyes,
Bred from old viking blood;
Like to those bright-haired sires he hies
Unto the warmer flood.
Strange scents come to him from the sands,
And banks of salty sward,
Where, on the Fame's high deck, he stands,
Brown hand upon his sword.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Dark lies the night of winter o'er
Homes left behind the sea;
But spring, upon this sunny shore,
Already wakes the lea.
In groups the Swedish farmers smile,
And stroke the yellow beard;
And rosy matrons lift, awhile,
Sweet children to be cheered.
No longer round the voyagers heaves
The blue brine of the bay;
Each prow the stately river cleaves,
And drinks the freshening spray.

Strange figures gather to the shore,
Bedecked with skins and paint;
Wild as that forest o'er whose floor
They range without restraint.
But friendly is the martial hand
Of Printz, the Governor;
Like brother steps he on their land,
Peace in his mien, not war.
In ear-shot of the Swedish drum
Dark sachems hunt and tilt;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

And love the Isle of Tinicum,
Where Printz's Hall is built.

II

PRINTZ'S HALL

"Printz seems to have come to America," says William C. Armor, in "Lives of the Governors of Pennsylvania," "with the expectation of holding court in the New World with all the formality and insignia of royalty preserved by the petty potentates of Europe. He is represented by De Vries, who came in a ship from New Amsterdam to visit him in October, 1643, as a man very furious and passionate, immense in person, weighing over four hundred pounds, and as drinking 'three drinks at every meal.' (De Vries probably means three bottles.) He was difficult of access, requiring communication to be made to him in writing. He built himself a palace suited to his rank, in the midst of orchards and pleasure-grounds, the bricks used in its construction having been brought from Stockholm. These bricks, of a pale-yellow color, and quite small, are still found in the neighborhood."

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

“Printz’s Hall,” says Benjamin Ferris, in his “History of the Original Settlements on the Delaware,” “stood more than 160 years, and was at last burnt down by accident, since the commencement of the present (19th) century.”

My heart goes back to rhyme
Upon that olden time!
Two hundred years are fled,
The ancient speech is dead,
Since on the isle of Tinicum,
Green as an emerald fair,
Rimmed by the Delaware,
Was heard the morning drum,
Or evening church-bells’ chime.
Eying the drowsy flood,
A mighty mansion stood;
Builded of brick and wood
Carried from Sweden’s shore
By Printz, the Governor.
Herein he drank his wine,
Watching the river shine
Beyond the level fields.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Here, proud and wild,
The sachems filed,
And found him just and mild.
But never yields
The sword he wields,
Nor pales his brow of tan,
Before the Holland man,
Before Manhattan's clan.
Gaily and gallantly,
Symbol of victory,
Fair Sweden's banner blows,
Nor rival fears nor knows!

III

THE SETTLEMENT

1.

Give, O ye Muses of Song, a sketch of old days in
New-Sweden,
When o'er the Delaware floated, unchallenged, the
flag of Christina.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

2.

Peaceful and primitive, then, were the lives and
homes of the people;

Busily plowed the farmer, or hunted the deer in the
forest;

Busily flew the wheel when the thrifty housewife sat
spinning.

Built of logs was each house, and painted red, as in
Sweden;

Built of logs was the barn, with its stalls for horses
and cattle;

Round about, in the fields, where the land had been
cleared of the forest,

Ripened the Indian-corn, to be ground into meal for
the winter.

Six days labored the folk, but when rose the sun of
the Sabbath,

Rifle and plow were dropped, and the wheel stood
still in its corner.

Then, from near and from far, to the churches three
of the province,

One at Tinicum, one at Wiccaco, one at Christina,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Gathered the congregations, God-fearing men and
their households.
Mostly by water they came, avoiding the tortuous
wood-paths,
Loving the canvas and oar, and the sights and sounds
of the river,
Loving the lift of the wave, like their grim fore-
fathers, the vikings.
Picturesque was the scene as the people entered the
church-door,
Each one wearing the dress of his native parish in
Sweden;
Youths in embroidered jackets, and maidens in
bodices scarlet,
Here the farmer of Smaland, in buckskin waistcoat
and breeches,
There, in her Sunday attire, the Dalecarlian matron.

3.

Hardly a league from the spot where now stands the
city of Chester,
Hardly a league from its mills, and the bustle and din
of its ship-yards,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Lies the Island of Tinicum, dotted with picturesque
homesteads.

Three miles in length it extends, in width a mile and
a quarter,

Rimmed by the waters of Darby creek and the Dela-
ware river.

Here, at the time of my tales, were the Swedish head-
quarters. A fortress,

Fashioned of hemlock-logs, commanded the creek
and the river;

Back of it stood the church, where preached from the
pulpit, each Sunday,

Doctor John Campanius, he who likewise translated
Into the Indian tongue the catechism written by
Luther;

While on the upland, its walls of yellow brick, carried
from Sweden,

Stood the mansion of Printz, that Governor doughty,
who figures

Always as friend of the Indian, and always as foe of
the Dutchman.

This, say the chroniclers old, was the handsomest
house in the province,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Large, substantially built, and tastefully furnished
within-doors.

Printz's Hall it was called. Before it (a fashion
from Holland)

Stood an octagonal pleasure-house; round it a garden
extended,

Where, in symmetrical beds, bloomed hyacinths,
tulips, and jonquils;

Back, over slight undulations, orchards of apple and
pear trees,

Apricot, cherry and peach trees, spread with their
bountiful harvests.

4.

Thus appeared Tinicum Island, thus passed the old
days in New-Sweden,

When o'er the Delaware floated, unchallenged, the
flag of Christina.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

IV

THE LADY ARMAGOT

Armgar (or, as it is generally written in the old records, Armagot) Printz, the daughter of Governor Printz, accompanied her father to America, resided with him on Tinicum Island, and there, in 1644, became the wife of Lieutenant John Pappegoya. On the return of Printz to Sweden he left his son-in-law in temporary charge of the province, to await the arrival of John Claudius Rising, the newly-appointed Governor. In the spring of 1654, Rising having arrived, John Pappegoya likewise returned to Sweden; his wife, however, remaining in the province. Here, in the extensive mansion built by Governor Printz upon Tinicum, she continued to dwell for many years; alone, save for a few servants, and living an almost secluded life. Though sometimes called by the name of her husband, she was generally known, both to the Swedes and the Dutch, by her maiden name of Armagot Printz, which she herself always used. "She had no children," says Dr. George Smith, in his "History of Delaware County,"

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

“and this fact renders her long-continued solitary residence on the Delaware the more remarkable.”

PART FIRST.

In her garden, where the river
Round the Isle of Tinicum
Swings with stately movement ever,
And the proud world's voice is dumb,
Like some spirit of the spot,
Kneels the Lady Armagot.

Still and cold, in pale moonlight,
Round about her statues stand;
But as still her head so bright,
And as cold her lily-hand;
Strange thy heart is not more gay,
Lady, on thy wedding-day!

Daughter of the Governor,
Of the gallant Printz, is she;
Who in many a godly war
Fought for Sweden, o'er the sea;
Here, to rule this gentle land,
Came he by his queen's command.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

On the hill, above the river,
 Stands the stately hall he made;
Round it lights of revel quiver
 On the garden's leafy shade;
In it, where the gay lamps shine,
Smiles the bridegroom o'er his wine.

Pale John Pappegoya's face.
 In his life at camp and court,
In his strife for wealth and place,
 He has burnt youth's candle short;
But the yellow gold he sought
Now a bonny bride hath brought.

PART SECOND.

Ten the years of mirth and tears
 Which across the world have flown;
To the castles of his peers,
 To the palace and the throne,
To his Sweden's somber tints,
Has returned the mighty Printz.

Now John Pappegoya's hand,
 From the Isle of Tinicum,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Rules New-Sweden's fertile land;
But each day the merry hum
Of the court is in his ear;
Little pleasure finds he here.

Faded is the rosy cheek
Of the Lady Armagot;
And her blue eyes ever seek
Resting-place where he is not;
In his breast love's flame burns dim,
Dead was aye her heart for him.

In the spring-time of the year,
Down the river, out the bay,
For fair Stockholm's wit and cheer
Lightly will they sail away:
Gay his blood runs at the thought;
She, soul-sickening, cares for naught.

What to her the court, the dance?
Dearer far the wild pine's sighing.
Once, in girlhood, would this chance
Have set golden fancies flying:
Now the ashes of her heart
Choke the roses that would start.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

PART THIRD.

In her chamber, stern and still,
 Stands she, looking o'er the river;
'Tis to-morrow's winds will fill
 Those white sails which yonder quiver;
'Tis to-morrow's dawn so dim
Which will see her hence with him.

Sounds a step her spirit knows;
 Comes her husband in the door;
From her face all color goes
 That has softened it before;
With a voice whose accent seeks
Naught but bitterness, she speaks.

“On the morrow, when thou sailest,
 Wherefore need I go with thee?
Long my eyes have seen thou failest
 In thy promised love for me;
But how can these lips reprove thee?
Well thou know'st I ne'er did love thee.

“In this house, which to my father
 Sweden gave, for him and his,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Let me dwell, forever, rather
Than thy home, whate'er it is;
True my life shall be to thee;
True thou need'st not be to me."

Somewhat paler with surprise
Does John Pappegoya grow;
Then, with cold light in his eyes,
Bows gallantly, and speaks low;
"Madam, I would hold you not;
Farewell, Lady Armagot!"

PART FOURTH.

Yellow wave the autumn willows
Round the isle of Tinicum;
Save the river's little billows,
Plashing ever, all is dumb;
Rank has grown the garden's sod
Since the mighty Printz here trod.

Never, now, within his hall,
Runs the wine and rings the laughter;
Seems the ivy like a pall,
Covering wall and covering rafter;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Only, in the silent spot,
Dwells the Lady Armagot.

Years have come, and years have gone,
Since adown the turbid river,
On that misty April dawn,
Sailed John Pappegoya: never
Knows she, now, a husband's claim;
Armigart Printz once more her name.

In the little church where meet
Rich and poor, from far and near,
For that sacred service sweet
To the pious tongue and ear,
Kneels she, with her head so bright
Bowed beneath two cherubs' sight.

Gentle she to one and all,
Though for friends she seems to care not,
In her home no children call,
Of her husband ask they dare not,—
They who, in her faded cheek,
Read some grief she will not speak.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Comes a time in winter dreary
When she sickens for the spring;
Comes a night when home her weary
Spirit heavenly angels bring;
May the God who gives us rest
Fold her closely to his breast!

V

BRITA

PART FIRST.

1.

A mighty hunter of the deer,
A fisherman in silent mere,
A trapper by the river reed
Was Olaf; his the huntsman's meed.
Azure his eyes, yellow his beard,
Seldom among men he appeared,
But down within the piny wood,
Somewhere, his habitation stood.

2.

A daughter had he like himself
In loneliness—a forest elf,
A fairy that all secrets knew

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Of bird and herb and midnight dew,
Born of a Lapland mother who
Had died to give her baby birth:
She scarcely seemed to be of earth.

3.

She had her father's eyes so fair,
His silent ways, his golden hair.
A harp, unto whose wondrous string
A scald of ocean once did sing,
She played upon, and could command
Sweet music with her elfin hand.
Sometimes, when by the river's flow
To sell his game would Olaf go,
Up to the fort on Tinicum,
Brita, to hear the fife and drum,
And see the soldiers proud and gay,
Would trudge beside him all the way,
With harp to help her roundelay,
And to the homesick garrison
Would sing old songs of booty won,
 Of love, and fame,
 And princely name,
And glorious always was her pay.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

4.

Strange was her father, like a ghost
Who came, then in the woods was lost;
Strange had her Lapland mother been,
Seer of visions few have seen;
Stranger than either was the child,
Singing her northern ballads wild.

5.

Among the officers was one
On whom she gazed like flower on sun,
A courtly youth, with eyes of gray,
Who had from Sweden sailed away
With Printz, and would return some day.
And when to him she sang, sometimes,
Her voice would tremble on the rhymes;
And cold her slender hands would grow,
Which should be merry with youth's glow;
And in her eyes, when he was near,
There shone a light so sad and clear
It almost trembled in a tear.

6.

But to his mind the wild song brought
Dreams of a maid whose hand he sought,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Who, in her castle o'er the sea,
Waited for him so faithfully.
And when, at even-tide, he saw
Brita, the harper, round her draw
The poor and faded cloak of gray
Which from her childish limbs did keep
The cruel autumn winds away,
He little knew what passionate sleep
Was hers, down in the piny wood,
Where Olaf's habitation stood.

PART SECOND.

1.

Spring lightly stepped across the land,
Scattering wild flowers from her hand;
And into sudden maidenhood
Bloomed Brita, down in piny wood;
But to the soldiers of the fort,
And to the sailors of the port,
Oft, still, she sang her songs; nor feared
Insult while Olaf's yellow beard
Behind her, like a flame, appeared.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

2.

But one bright day,
When summer lay
Over the land like mother's smile,
In a lone spot,
Where men came not,
She stayed for Olaf; (who, meanwhile,
Unto the Upland people sold
The booty of a forage bold)
And spying, where it shone so blue,
A flower that o'er the river grew,
Upon a high, outstretching bank,
Whose narrow base the stream did flank,
She left her harp (without whose string,
Accompanying, she would seldom sing)
Below, and quickly climbed till she
The treasure clasped; then suddenly
Round her the forest seemed to swim;
Waves closed above her; sense grew dim.

3.

Beside the river strolled, that day,
An officer from Tinicum;
He saw the jutting bank give way,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

A cry he heard, then all was dumb.
Through bush and wood-vine, pausing not,
He leaped, a rescuer, to the spot.
Lo, by the river's brink, the harp
Of Brita—hers that cry so sharp!
Lo, in the deep and turbid stream,
A figure—hers he could but deem!

4.

Against young Axel's heart was pressed
A bosom ne'er before so blessed;
And as, from out the flood, he bore
Brita in safety to the shore,
Rested upon her face his eyes
In admiration and surprise.
A dreamy child, old Olaf's lass,
He oft, ere this, had marked her pass;
Minstrel of wave-girt Tinicum,
Whose songs the soldiery would hum;
But in a few swift months had grown
A woman, and a child had flown.

5.

All pale, upon the mossy bank,
He laid her, then beside her knelt;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

His eyes her budding beauty drank,
Within his heart love's joy he felt;
While she, encircled by his arms,
Rested as though beyond all harms.

6.

At last, unto the soldier's ear
Came wandering accents, growing clear,
As on a face she oft had seen
Gazed Brita, with half-conscious mien.
How like the blue forget-me-not
Those eyes which shone upon him now!
How like the rose those blushes hot
Illuminating cheek and brow!
Then, suddenly rising, she put off
(So doth a flower its calyx doff)
The cloak of blue which he had thrown
About her, and, in faltering tone,
The flame still burning on her cheek,
She tried her gratitude to speak.

7.

A snap—as of a broken bush—
Then through the underwood did push,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

With hunter stride, and shouldered gun,
Olaf, his Upland business done.
A cloud came o'er his blue eyes' gleam,
Much mystified he, too, did seem,
To see, together, by the stream,
The officer of Tinicum,
And Brita, standing wet and numb.
But when the story he had heard,
Told in his daughter's gentle word,
A look came into his strange face
Such as had seldom lit the place;
And, with a moisture in his eye
He left for the soft breeze to dry,
He clasped the soldier's youthful hand
And spoke his thanks; though, all unmanned,
Scarce could he speak the words he planned.

8.

Then from his shoulders broad he drew
A cloak, which he o'er Brita threw,
And, while in silence Axel stood,
They disappeared within the wood.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

PART THIRD.

1.

East of the river Delaware,
Between it and the ocean's wave,
There is a land which now doth bear
The title England later gave,
In honor of that loyal lord
Who held fair Jersey's island-sward:
A land once covered by the sea
It is, o'er whose reality
Still broods the ocean's mystery:
A region wild and desolate,
Left by the waters to its fate:
A seemingly-haunted tract: a land
Of low pine-wood, and gray sea-sand,
And dismal pools, and marshes old,
And ancient sea-things turned to mold
Beneath the sand's o'er-sweeping fold:
Here once the Atlantic billows rolled.

2.

Hidden in the depths of the pine-wood,
Here, now, the home of Olaf stood.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

3.

A lamp is set in Brita's room,
It glimmers through the midnight gloom:
 Is it to guide
 Him to her side
Who through the forest now doth ride?
If 'tis for that woe will betide!

4.

How pale her elfin face to-night!
How trembles she, as if with fright!
Far off is Olaf; wassail's sound
The sough of the wild pines has drowned;
To Printz, the merry Governor,
He sells his game, a goodly store,
And till the morrow will be gone.
Doth Brita fear to be alone?
 Answer ye eyes
 Which to the skies
Like stars more beautiful arise!

5.

A shadow cometh from the wood,
It is a horse and rider good;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

An eye doth heed the lonely light,
Shining, like Hero's, through the night;
A hand doth knock upon the door,
Which never rested there before;
A kiss doth fall on Brita's cheek,
For which would Olaf vengeance wreak.

PART FOURTH.

1.

Immortal Venus, queen of Love,
What life is theirs whom thou dost move!
What ecstasies! What blinded eyes!
What hearts which naught save dalliance prize!
What sweet forgetfulness of things
Terrestrial, and of Time's swift wings!

2.

'Tis midnight—often since that hour
When first the pines did round him lower,
Borne on by Love, has Axel come,
A secret guest, to Olaf's home;
Unbidden—unseen—save by the one
Who in her chamber waits alone
When up to Tinicum hath gone

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Her father, or, upon the mere,
By torch-light, hunts the antlered deer.

3.

'Tis midnight—and, from Brita's room,
A light shines on the forest's gloom;
Within how blissful is the air
To him who beauty's bower doth share;
There are some jewels in her hair
Which Axel's hand hath twisted there.
But plaintively her fingers pass
Over her harp, as if, alas,
She felt some shadow drawing near,
Whose breath did fill her soul with fear.
Beside her, at her gentle feet,
So fair to see, so frailly fleet
To wander into paths unmeet,
Sits Axel, winding tresses sweet.

4.

Unto her music listening,
He does not speak—he does not move;
But ever holds those locks of love,
About his fingers glistening.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Then, as the strange chords die away,
And she her harp doth cease to play,
Around her elfin shape he flings
His arm, and to her thus he sings:

SONG.

“Brita, with her golden hair,
Plays for me a wizard air;
Dressed in white
Is she to-night,
Like a spirit strange and fair;
Or enchantress who, from lands
Where no human foot ere stands,
Draws the fairy
By the eerie
Music of her milk-white hands.

“As the room her music fills,
As the sweet, fantastic trills
Wander out into the night,
Flying spirits hear aright:
'Tis no melody of earth
Which thus lures them from their mirth;
'Tis the magic of a hand

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Skilled to rule the fairy band;
From their singing,
Ether winging,
Come they at the sweet command.

“Circling round me, as I sit,
In the window spirits flit.
Goblins flying past the moon
Hear the potent prelude soon
And, in cloaks of green and gray,
Merrily proceed this way.
Each upon a broomstick good,
Ride the witches from the wood;
Peakéd cap and scarlet shoe,
Much the damage they can do;
But no mischief-making flight
Meditates this throng to-night.
Now, afloat on perfumed wind
Blowing straight from fairy-land,
All her nymphs a train behind,
Comes some queen with wand in hand.
Spirits dark and spirits bright,
Inky imps whose day is night,
Naiads who with wave-drops gleam

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Fresh from the pellucid stream,
Ghosts of cobwebbed corridors
Where naught human treads the floors,
All the mystic beings we
Dream about but seldom see,
Revel in this room to-night,
 (Round and round,
 As in a swound)
Where the elf-queen plays in white.

“Brita, O thou knowest well
How to weave the conjurer’s spell!
In what kingdom of the air
Didst thou, with thy golden hair,
Learn those things that few would dare?
From what hag, or wizard old,
Heardst thou first this witch-call bold,
That from off the silent wold,
And from out the dripping cave,
Brings these sprites that round thee rave?

“Brita, with thy magic art
Thou hast won my wandering heart;
In the mesh of thy sweet hair

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Thou dost hold it, sorceress fair;
By the music thou dost make
Charmed, I have no wish to wake;
But, as now, in sight of thee,—
 Dressed in white,
 With jewels bright,
Playing in the summer night,—
Fain would lie eternally.”

5.

A tear doth shine in Brita's eye,
She trembles as his accents die,
Perhaps 'tis but the night-wind chill,
Perhaps his singing suits her ill,
But closer to him she doth draw,
As if a ghost she felt or saw.

6.

What ails the air to-night? What woe
Impending will the morrow show?
What thoughts oppress young Axel's heart,
And make him from his dreaming start?
What cruel words, alas, are they
His faltering lips now strive to say?

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

7.

To-morrow, ere the close of day,
For Sweden will he sail away,
To-morrow, broken-hearted, she
For the last time his face will see,
To-morrow, at the set of sun,
For them will love's sweet dream be done.

PART FIFTH.

1.

It is a night in early March,
The moon looks down from heaven's great arch
Upon a spot where few e'er come,
Olaf the hunter's forest home.
The spring is lengthening fast the day,
But wintry, still, the winds which play
With ancient pine, and cedar dark,
That on the sand wild shadows mark;
And cold the waters of the pool,
For hard has been the winter's rule.

2.

Into the sight
Of Luna bright
There comes a figure dumb and white;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

From Olaf's door,
The gray sand o'er,
Toward the dark wood it takes its flight;
'Tis Brita; hers that golden hair,
That pallid face, distraught yet fair.

3.

Deep in a gloomy grove of pine,
Where resinous odors ever float,
There is a pool unknown to line,
And never crossed by hunter's boat.
A horror round it seems to dwell,
Why, those who pass it ne'er can tell,
But rumor whispers 'tis a place
Where evil spirits show the face.
Shunned was it in the red man's day
And the New-Sweden of my lay.

4.

Upon its sullen waters deep,
A figure floats in death's last sleep;
Beautiful as in a swoon,
All silvered by the silent moon;
Closed are those eyes, as wild-flowers blue,
Still is that heart love's power o'erthrew;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Never again, within this world,
For her sad human mysteries;
Above her angels' wings are furled,
Which soon shall bear her to the skies.

5.

At daybreak, when the east was red,
By prescient dream, or instinct led,
There came a being desolate
Unto this shore and pool of fate.
Yellow his beard, azure his eyes,
After a daughter sweet he flies,
Brita the name of this dear life,
Born to him by a dying wife,
Where hath she wandered in the night?
Where doth she lie, in some sad plight?

6.

In other regions is her soul,
Already hath she passed death's goal,
It is not she that drifts, so white,
Among the reeds before his sight,
'Tis but a body born of earth,
Though beautiful in grief or mirth,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

She breathes, methinks, in shape more fair,
Celestial, not terrestrial air!

7.

Where sighing pines their branches wave
Was made, with stricken hands, a grave.
Over it still, spring after spring,
Their liquid hymn the thrushes sing;
And in the sand sweet blossoms grow,
Marking her dust that lies below.
But never more, in wood-path wild,
Or clearing where the harvest smiled,
Or in the fort, or in the town,
Or by the river, swollen and brown,
Was Olaf seen, or heard his deed,
By Indian swart, or fair-haired Swede.

VI

ERIC THE ARCHER

1.

A hostelry in Upland town;¹
Outside the rain was pouring down;

¹ Now Chester, Pennsylvania. The name was changed from Upland to Chester by William Penn.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Within the night
With mirth was bright,
And wassail did the tempest drown;
The fire was warm, the ale was good,
The landlord in a jovial mood,
And merrily ran the Norsemen's blood.

2.

Grouped round the blazing logs of Yule,
Tales of their forefathers they told;
Of vikings who the seas did rule,
Skillful in storm, in battle bold;
Of one whose boat,
'Tis said, did float
Once on this broad South River's breast:
Whose men did land
Where now doth stand
The Hall of Printz; whose life was quest;
Who, eagle-like, espied the West
Long ere the illustrious Genoese
Sensed land upon the Haytian breeze;
Whose galleys sailed from Iceland down,
O'er unknown and tempestuous seas,
Unto a spot before untold—

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

The Vinland of the Sagas old,
Unto that spot where now, 'midst trees
Primeval, stands fair Upland town;
A new-world gem in Sweden's crown.

3.

Last spoke, with details long drawn out,
A learned burgher, hale and stout;
His hair and beard with years were gray,
But red his cheeks as apples gay,
 And bright his eyes
 As though youth's skies
Danced over him but yesterday.
A man of mark was he, and bore
A name well-known on Sweden's shore,
For of his blood those brothers twain
Who figure in great Vasa's reign,
Divines both bold and erudite,
Born or to reason or to fight.¹

¹ Olaf and Lawrence Peterson, who, in the reign of Gustavus Vasa, introduced Protestantism into Sweden. They were born in Orebro, Sweden, and studied in Germany under Luther. Olaf was rector of the church in Stockholm, and afterward High Chancellor of the Kingdom. "By his preaching and publications, and the composition of the Church Manual," says Professor Butler, in his History of the Refor-

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

4.

Their chairs his listeners nearer pull;
He drains the glass which has been full,
And, while the lights and shadows flit
Over the groups that round him sit,
Relates the tale which here is writ.

PART FIRST.

There was a king in Norroway,
Whose name was Gorm the Red;
His beard was like a sunrise gay,
And like the north-light dread
His royal head.

Of fir the banquet hall was built
Where oft he wassailed long;
When on the waves his ships did tilt,
Served was he, right or wrong,
By vikings strong.

mation in Sweden, "Olaf gave shape and organization to the church." Lawrence was elected Archbishop of Upsal by the Assembly of Bishops in 1531, at the age of 32, and was the first Protestant Archbishop in Sweden. He administered the metropolitan See of Upsal (which corresponds to that of Canterbury in England) for forty years. He was ennobled, and married a cousin of the King.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Round the far Mediterranean's capes

His white-winged galleys flew;

And like phantasmagoric shapes

Rose from the waters blue.

Whence? No man knew.

For here were famous cities old,

Whose treasures none could tell;

But each and all before the bold

Stroke of the Norsemen fell,

From fiord and dell.

And here were dark-eyed maidens sweet,

With lips like fruit divine:

O booty for a viking meet,

When, homeward-bound, in line

His galleys shine!

And here, to mark his warlike flight,

A banner Gorm had made;

Whereon, upon a field of white,

A raven was displayed,

Worked in black braid.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

It was the bird of Odin great,
His ancestor divine;
From Heaven it bore the word of Fate,
And victory did assign,
Or woe condign.

A raven o'er his helmed brow
Perched in auspicious ease;
A raven decked his galley's prow,
Sitting above the seas,
Where swept the breeze.

A mighty and a merry king,
In sooth, was Gorm the Red;
And, next to battle, loved the ring
Of song, or dancer's tread;
Gloom from him fled.

Like Solomon of old he sipped
The sweets from many a flower;
Each sea wherein his galleys dipped
Saw maids with beauty's dower
Culled for his bower.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

But grizzled grew the mighty Gorm,
And grim his merry face,
And came a time when woman's form
Suffered he not to grace
His dais-place.

Where did the Goddess Freya stay,
Where did she roam or rest,
That never more in Norroway
Was maid meet to be pressed
To kingly breast?

So gloomily, in the banquet-hall,
He sat and bit his beard;
And by him when he strode, so tall,
No woman's face appeared;
Shunned was he and feared.

At last, howe'er, a viking bold
Sought out the king and said
That in a Lapland village old,
Lived one whom Thor might wed,
Or Odin dread.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

A maiden gentle as the fawn,
And chaste as the new moon,
And beautiful as summer-dawn;
The gods of Asgard soon
Would grasp such boon.

Far up the coast of Norroway,
Where red the Aurora rolled,
Nestled this fishing-village gray,
Within the azure fold
Of fiord so cold.

Then Gorm bethought him of a youth
Ready to do or die,
And in his simple word was truth,
And in his frank blue eye
Shone honor high.

Eric the Archer was he called;
So swift and sure his arrow
That, lightning-like, so sang the scald,
Armor, flesh, bone and marrow
Its fang would harrow.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

To him then spoke King Gorm the Red;

“Take thou good galleys three,

And, that to her I may be wed,

This maiden o’er the sea

Bring back to me.”

PART SECOND.

Sped the archer Eric then,

Gathered ships and arms and men,

Sailed away into the north,

Where the beard of Thor streams forth,

Sailed away unto that land

Ruled, ’twas said, by warlock’s hand,

Land of Lapp and Finn, whose shape

Endeth in the polar cape.

Bright the ships of Eric shone

In these waters gray and lone;

Golden-headed,

Ocean-wedded,

Stared his dragons o’er the deep.

Save when anchored,

Or age-cankered,

Ne’er the Norsemen’s horses sleep!

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Red the warriors' shields did ride
All along each dragon's side;
Scales impenetrable seemed
When athwart the coast they gleamed.
Thus, with banner and with spear,
Bringing wonderment and fear,
Sailed the archer Eric forth,
Till the Arctic seas he felt;
Far away into the north,
Where the maiden, Signe, dwelt.

Round and round the polar sun,
Like a wheel, each day did run;
Never sank he in his flight,
But, when it should be midnight,
Cast a light o'er sea and land,
Touched by which, as by a wand,
All earth's objects seemed to be
Things of unreality;
Cast a preternatural light,
Like the ether which makes bright
Dreamland to a dreamer's sight.

Last his galleys Eric brought
Safely to the haven sought,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

And right garrulous found the folk
When of Signe fair he spoke.
Ne'er was such a lovely face
Seen before in all this place;
Such a charming foot and hand
In this or any other land;
Freya, with her golden hair,
Than this maid was not more fair.

From his galleys and their men
Went the archer Eric then,
And the maiden Signe found
In her simple raiment gowned.
When she heard his steps draw near,
Quickly she, in sudden fear,
Turned, as does the startled deer:
Sure a king was he who came,
Red his mantle as a flame,
Round his neck a golden torque,
Beard divided like a fork,
On his helm a raven sat,
And upon the shield he bore,
Outlined on its surface flat,
Likewise perched the bird of war.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Low he bowed before the maid,
Who her heart did thus upbraid:
Heart, why shouldst thou be afraid
Of a prince so fair and tall?
May be at my feet his all
Lays he as, by beauty won,
Kings in sagas old have done.

Then the word of Gorm the Red
Eric spoke; but nothing said
Of the love which filled his heart
As he watched the blushes start
On the maiden's cheeks and brow;
Not for him was Signe now;
Said no word, and made no sign
Of the heart which in him bled;
But, across the bitter brine,
Bore her to King Gorm the Red.

PART THIRD.

The king was drinking in his hall,
The day was growing dim,
When, ere the autumn night did fall,
This word was brought to him.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

The ships had come; no longer he
A fitting mate should lack;
Bold Eric, with his galleys three,
Had brought the maiden back.

Like snow was Signe's forehead fair,
Her eyes like sapphires bright,
And fays had spun her golden hair
Out of the fine sunlight.

If but the king this maid would place
Before his royal eyes,
He'd own such loveliness would grace
Valhalla's companies.

Then loudly laughed King Gorm the Red;
For many a night and day
Not thus had wagged his grizzled head,
Nor been his mood so gay.

"Go bid my bride be fitly dressed;
And bid her wear the ring
Of that dark princess I did wrest
From Sicily's proud king;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

“Ay, bid her choose whatever silk
Is fairest to her taste;
And rubies red, and pearls of milk,
Which now their beauty waste;

“For if right well she pleases me,
And well she will, I ween,
Ere sinks to-morrow in the sea
This girl shall be my queen.”

He swore, with wagging head, an oath;
By Odin great he swore;
And one and all, to laugh not loath,
Joined in the merry roar.

The sun of morning-tide had run
Full half-way up the sky
When, fairer than that morning sun,
Rose Signe with a sigh.

She chose a silk of blue to grace
Her young and slender form,
And in her golden locks did place
The jewels of King Gorm.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

A monarch great was he who brought
Such treasures o'er the sea;
"But rather would I live unsought
Than be his bride," said she.

Now with the brooch that suits her best,
And in her silk of blue,
Her gentle body she hath dressed,
Though sad her spirit true.

And to the king's house she doth go,
Where, in his banquet-hall,
Already walks Gorm to and fro,
And for his bride doth call.

Admiringly the vikings stare,
Opens the scald his eyes;
So beauteous she the very air
Seems smitten with surprise!

Right down before the monarch's feet
Her loveliness she throws;
Ah, surely, such a suppliant sweet
Friends round her finds, not foes!

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

“O king,” she cries, “O royal Gorm,
Who rulest all this land,
Fairer than mine should be the form
Of maid who seeks thy hand;

“Free then, I pray, this peasant life,
Decked now in raiment gay;
One nobler take thou for thy wife,
And bid me go my way!”

The king in mute surprise did stare,
While, moveless, on the floor
Yet Signe knelt; a sight so fair
Gorm ne’er had seen before.

He spoke at last. “What, dost thou fear
The king, my pretty one?
Fear not, but listen. Far and near,
In climes of snow and sun

“I’ve roamed, an eagle strong and fleet;
But ne’er beheld my eyes,
In any land, a maid so meet
To be my queen. Arise!”

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

He stooped above her golden head,
He took her hand so white;
Her face was like that of one dead,
It was a piteous sight.

“O king,” she said, “my lips are cold,
I cannot marry thee;
There is another who doth hold
The heart thou seek’st from me.”

Watching the scene with troubled eye,
Not far off, Eric stood;
A sudden joy, he scarce knew why,
Thrilled, at these words, his blood.

Then dropped King Gorm his manner bland,
And Signe’s gentle cheek,
Though lightly, struck with angry hand,
She standing wan and weak.

Like frightened deer, that scents the chase,
But knows not where to fly,
Then, suddenly, with wild eyes, a place
Of refuge doth descry.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

The maiden gazed upon the throng
Of strange and bearded men
Until, a friend her foes among,
The archer she did ken.

Toward him whose face she knew so well
Straight flew this quarry sweet;
Then, with a cry distressful, fell,
Unconscious, at his feet.

“Ho, ho,” the monarch, scowling, cried,
“All now, methinks, I know;
To steal his king’s intended bride
My bowman was not slow!”

Spoke out the archer Eric then;
“O king, wrong is thy thought;
This maiden, with my ships and men,
From Lapland’s shore I brought.

“But never uttered I one word,
Nor, knowingly, made sign,
Which could with love for me have stirred
Her heart, that should be thine.”

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

“Thou liest,” roared the enkindled Gorm,
His face convulsed with rage;
Round them the berserkers did swarm,
And saga-tellers sage;

“Thou liest, and if thou hadst not blood
Of Odin in thy veins,
This night a wheeling raven’s food
Thou shouldst be for thy pains.

“Howbeit, since one of my kith
Thou art, if not my kin,
And I a warrior bargain with,
This maiden thou may’st win.

“Right oft have I thy merry jest
At other bowmen heard;
Thy boast that thou, of all the best,
Couldst wing the flying bird,

“And (so unerring that dart’s flight
Which thou on string dost lay)
Couldst pierce with ease an apple bright,
Paces three-score away.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

“Seek, therefore, cunning for thy hand,
And teach thy heart to dare,
For on the morrow thou shalt stand
Before this maiden fair

“And, ere her beauty thou dost wed,
An apple round and gay
Shalt shoot from off her golden head,
Paces three-score away.”

PART FOURTH.

Bright rose the morning
O'er Norway's mountains,
Hamlets and blue fiords,
And on Gorm's dwelling
Fell the sun's lances.
Outside the great-hall
Touched they the helmets
Of captains and warriors,
Standing accoutered,
Waiting in silence
For the king's order.
Gay the men's mantles,
Blue like the ocean;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

But, like the moor-land
In dreary mid-winter,
Sad were their faces.
Soon from his prison
Were they to lead forth
Eric the Archer;
Him whom they all loved,
Him who in battle
Oft-times had led them.
When in mid-welkin
The sun shone at noontide,
Then would the monarch's
Word be accomplished,
Mandate most cruel.
Then with his long-bow,
Yew tipped with silver,
Won from the Briton,
Eric the Archer
At a red apple
Placed on the golden
Tresses of Signe
Daringly would shoot.
May mighty Odin
Guide the swift arrow!

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Pale from his prison
Came forth the archer,
But in his bosom
Stoutly his heart beat,
And in his glances
Glittered a purpose.

Only when saw he
Signe the maiden
Standing so calmly
Under the linden,
Clad in the gray gown
As he first met her,
Over his blue eyes
(Dim for a moment)
Passed he his fingers,
And unto Odin,
Blessed All-Father,
Rose a prayer fervent.

Then on her bright head
Placed he an apple,
And her eyes covered,
Lest she should tremble

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

When from his long-bow
Flew the swift arrow.
No word of passion,
No word of parting,
Spoke he unto her;
No kiss between them
Passed for a token;
But without language
(So 'tis with lovers)
Held they last converse;
And without kisses
Each knew the other.

On a black stallion,
Splendid with trappings,
Sat the Red Monarch.
Stern was his visage,
Cruel his gray eye,
As on the people
Gazed he at noontide;
Noting fair Signe
Under the linden,
And, in his red cloak,
Eric the Archer,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Who from his quiver
Drew forth two arrows.

Silent the people,
Silent the soldiers.
Scarce breathed the women.
Deftly the archer
One of the arrows
Stuck in his girdle,
Fitting the other
Into his long-bow;
Then, with aim steady,
Shot toward the maiden.

Cleft was the apple.
Down on the green sward
Tumbled the bright halves.
But like an aspen
Trembled the maiden.
She who so calmly
Waited the arrow,
Standing like statue
Carved out of marble,
Motionless, silent;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Now felt her bosom
Rising and falling,
Heaving like ocean,
Heard her heart beating
Hard as a hammer,
And o'er her blue eyes
Pressed her slim fingers,
Shivering and weeping.

Shouted the people,
Wept all the women,
Swore every gray-beard
Ne'er was such shooting,
Laughed the grim vikings
With pride and with pleasure,
Better than Eric
Never lived bowman.
Only the old king
Crimsoned with anger,
"Wherefore that arrow
Stuck in thy girdle?
One would have done thee."

Answered the archer:
"King, for thy bosom

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

That was intended,
Had my hand failed me."

Then to the cruel
Eyes of the other
Hate flew and fury;
Demons of Nastrond
Glared from those windows;
And, as if stricken
By the fierce lightning
Of his own passion,
Down from his saddle,
Dead on the greensward,
Rolled the Red Monarch.

Few there were loved him;
Tyrant imperious
He in his winter;
Stern, unrelenting.
But he a viking
Wonderful had been;
And like a viking's
His mausoleum.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

On a high mountain,
Covered with forests,
Save where it lifted,
Clear of all mantle,
Sternly its bare head—
Which like a war-god
Sat by the ocean,
Stars on his forehead,
Pines in his right hand,
Dreaming of battle—
Here, on the summit,
Laid they the monarch.

Then, in the temple
Holy of Balder,
One day were wedded
Eric the Archer,
Signe the maiden.
Merry with music
The bridal procession;
Mighty the banquet
When in the great-hall
Eric held wassail.
Heir to the throne he,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Royal his race was,
Offspring of Odin.
High in the king's seat
Drank he the brown ale;
Round him his warriors
Jovially feasted;
And close beside him,
Fair as a lily
In a wild forest,
Or as a bright star
Shining 'mid storm-clouds,
Sat his Queen, Signe.

The clock in Upland's inn struck one;
The burgher's old-world tale was done;
He ceased; and for a moment's space
None speaking, silence filled the place;
Broken only by the sound of rain
And wind in tree and on the pane;
Then, and its warmth the tempest drowned,
The applause of hand and voice went round.

But in the narrator's bearded face,
Fired by this saga of his race,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Lingered a look as though, in dreams,
Still he rehearsed Odinic themes,
And, from this peaceful Upland far,
Wandered within that past of war.
And, truly, like a viking old,
Skillful in storm, in battle bold,
He seemed: one born on this late stage,
But made for that heroic age,
When Harold scoured the Hebrides,
And Rolf the Ganger sailed the seas.

VII

THE FALL OF FORT CHRISTINA

The capture of Fort Christina, by the Dutch under Stuyvesant, September 25, 1655, ended the Swedish dominion on the Delaware; but the bulk of the population, including the principal land-owners, were still Swedes; and down to the coming of William Penn there was little change in the general aspect of the colony. After the advent of the English, however, the Swedish tongue gradually fell into disuse, though the old customs and manners of dressing lingered for

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

many years along the river. Down to the close of the Revolution, a period of almost a century and a half from the founding of the colony, ministers were regularly sent from Sweden, at the expense of the crown, to supply the spiritual wants of the churches in Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey. The last of these clergymen was Nicholas Collin, who arrived in the colony in 1770, and who, for a period of 45 years, presided over the church of Gloria Dei, at Wicaco, Philadelphia. It was not until his death, in the year 1831, that the Swedish mission can really be said to have ceased.

PART FIRST.

1.

When Sweden sent bold Minuit out,
With soldiers brave, and farmers stout,
To plant, prepared for peace or war,
A colony on new-world shore,
His ships into this river burst,
Upon this shore he landed first,
And, built of logs of hemlock wood,
Here was it his gallant fortress stood.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

2.

Christina, fort and woodland green
He named, in honor of his queen;¹
Christina, too, he named the stream
Which wandered by, with purl and gleam,
Till in the brown flood of the river
Its gentler waves were lost forever.
Here many a year that banner hung
Beneath whose folds the scald once sung;
Here, with his blue eyes filled with dreams
Of what wise science folly deems,
At night the Swedish soldier saw
In heaven fair Freya's distaff shine,
And, like a flame, great Odin draw
Across the north his beard divine.

3.

But came a time when wrath did stir
The bosom of the Hollander,
And, like a toper from his dram,
Awoke to arms New-Amsterdam.

¹ Queen Christina of Sweden, the daughter of Gustavus Adolphus. The stream is now called Christiana, a name which, to the writer, seems not so good as the original title, being entirely without historical significance.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Between its burghers red and stout,
And the fair Swede of Tinicum,
Had rattled many a warlike drum,
Precursor of the coming bout.
But while from Scandinavian air,
Still echoed, like a trumpet's blare,
The sound of Lutzen round the world,
And Sweden sat with flag unfurled,
And o'er these far domains yet shone
The glory of Gustavus' throne,
The captains of New-Netherlands,
Drank down their ale with bloodless hands,
Nor sought to try their valiant flints
Against the haughty sword of Printz.
Dimmed now, however, was the fame
Which gallant Sweden then had won;
Less potent, with each passing sun,
The prestige of the Scandian name.
No more to godly strife marched forth
The bearded conquerors of the north,
But Stockholm's palaces of state
Re-echoed oft with revels late.
Gone was the great Gustavus now,
And on Christina's wayward brow

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

(Though child she was of genius true)
Irk some the cares of empire grew,
Till came a time when (none too soon,
For wreckage had her path bestrewn)
Lightly the daughter cast aside
The crown for which her father died.
And now—who knows what will betide?
So in the brain of Stuyvesant,
The gallant governor of Manhattan,
Was borne a wondrous scheme to plant
Proud Holland's flag where now did fatten,
On many a rolling river-mead,
The sheep and cattle of the Swede;
And when, his spirit to inflame,
News of another insult came,
Of sons of Holland forced to bow
Before the haughty Northmen low,
He swore, by many a warlike sire,
Vengeance immediate and dire.

4.

A chief as terrible was he
As ever led by land or sea.
Blue was the lordly coat he wore,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

And bright with buttons down before,
And by his trousers, gay and wide,
Dangled a sword of temper tried.
In battles fierce and memorable
Well had he fought, so ran the fable,
And many an insolent head laid low
When governor of Curacao.
There was it, by the tropic seas,
In combat with the Portuguese,
That he had lost the valorous leg,
Replaced, now, by a silver peg.

5.

Extensive was the preparation:
Unprecedented the sensation:
 From morn till night,
 In raiment bright,
Strutted the warriors of the nation.
Keen were the weapons which they twirled;
Fierce were the oaths they from them hurled;
Never before, this side the world,
Was mightier host, nor huger ration.
At last, with twice four hundred men,
And seven staunch ships, a gallant sight,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Beyond the wondering city's ken
Sailed Stuyvesant unto the fight.

PART SECOND.

1.

Over New-Sweden's gentle land,
Its fertile fields, its river strand,
Where dwelt, in many a peaceful home,
The children of the Baltic's foam,—
Whose fathers to these self-same shores,
With gleaming prows and brawny oars,
Old legends tell us once did roam;—
Over this land of loveliness,
This land which summer now did bless
With waters sweet, and fragrant air,
And all things bounteous and fair;
Ruled Rising, the new governor,
With men-at-arms perhaps three-score.

2.

From Fort Christina's ramparts old
Floated his flag with aspect bold;
Listlessly, in the summer's heat,
Each stalwart sentry paced his beat;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Silent for many a year had been
Those cannon glowering o'er the scene.
Only when up the river came
Some trading Dutchman, full of wine,
How fiercely, threatening awful flame,
Frowned each and all along the line.¹
Naught dreamed the jovial chief of ill
As, on this afternoon so still,
His glass with Malmsey he did fill.

3.

Like meteor unforeseen and dire,
Hurled by a superhuman ire,
Came Stuyvesant upon the land;
Ere once his cannoneers did shoot,
Fort Casimer, with richest loot,
Fell low before his mighty hand;
Then, while his hosts with triumph burned,
He on Christina swiftly turned.

4.

From fugitives, who bore the word,
Brave Rising had the tidings heard;

¹ All ships ascending the river were obliged to lie to, and secure a permit from the Governor, before they were allowed to proceed.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

And strove his men, by day and night,
To fit the fortress for the fight.
Few were they at the drum's stern call,
A round or two had they in all,
And when the frowning battery old
Once had pronounced its challenge bold,
Silent each gun must stand and cold;
But when fair Sweden called to arms,
Welcome were toil and war's alarms.

5.

With trumpets playing loud and fierce,
And glittering steel, the Swede to pierce,
And deafening drums, and gaudy flags,
And booty rich, which somewhat lags;
With war-ships gay and terrible,
Whose guns the strongest fort could fell,
Whose sailors, veterans of the seas,
The highest wall could scale with ease;
Taking all things their hands could touch
To Fort Christina came the Dutch.

6.

Loudly they laughed,
Deeply they quaffed,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Fiercely was clutched each weapon's haft,
As, through the sweet September air,
When eve had hushed their trumpets' blare,
They saw the banner of the Swede,
Waving above the river reed.
But more than empty scoff and rant
Intended Peter Stuyvesant;
And, with the morning drum, was sent
A message from his lordly tent;
The salutations of the sender,
And summons to a swift surrender.

7.

Arrayed in coat so blue and bright,
And trousers red, a gallant sight,
And bearing high an ensign white,
Went forth the messenger of truce;
Scarce could the summons have been heard,
Scarce time was there to bring the word,
When back he came, like a game-bird
Strutting, whose warlike ire is loose.

8.

When he the governor addressed,
Bold Rising knew not what he meant;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

And when he further spoke, expressed
Amazement at the fell intent.
Peace ruled on the South River's shore;
Wherefore did Holland threaten war?
But still, as to capitulation,
'Twas not the habit of the nation.
Wondered the chief that he a Swede
Should ask to do so weak a deed;
Without the firing of a gun,
Before the passing of a sun.
No; to the head from whom he came,
A captain not unknown to fame,
He must return; and here should wave,
Forevermore proud Sweden's banner.
Thus spoke, with scorn, the governor brave;
Curt was his word, and curt his manner.

9.

Then rose the hosts of Stuyvesant,
And batteries on the hills did plant;
And round Christina, through the night,
Blazed the invaders' camp-fires bright.
Fat were the swine they stole, I wis;
Fair were the maids they sought to kiss;

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

A land so bountiful as this
Not often lay before their sight,
Not often fell before their might.

PART THIRD.

1.

Silent, beside a silent gun,
John Rising stood, the governor.
Food for his soldiers there was none,
Gone was his powder long before.
Hard fate. It was the fourteenth day
Since, all accoutered for the fray,
The hosts of Netherland had burst
Upon this valley, never cursed
Before by war and warrior's wit
Since Sweden's flag had sheltered it.
It was that day when, dark with shame,
To Sweden's shore would fly his name.

2.

Uprose his eyes unto the spot
Where, like a beauteous sunset cloud,
The banner of his country shone.
To-morrow's dawn would see it not.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Upon his breast his head was bowed,
He heard the Holland trumpet blown.

3.

With arms and kit,
As did befit
Men who in glory's book had writ
Their names on Lutzen's field of blood,
His soldiers marched out of the fort,
And home to Gottenburg's far port
Were sent, across the ocean's flood.

4.

Then all the fair South River lands
Lay low beneath the invader's hands,
And proud the flag of Holland flew
Above sad hearts to Sweden true.
But years of triumph were there few.
For England, conquering land and sea,
Soon brought the Dutchman to his knee,
And to great Penn's benignant hand
Was given this bright and goodly land.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

VIII

BLACKBEARD

The exploits of the pirate Blackbeard, in the early part of the eighteenth century, form a narrative almost as thrilling as those of his fellow-corsair Kidd. His real name was Edward Teach, and he was a native of Bristol, England; but he was commonly known, on account of his long black beard (which he used to cherish by tying it up with ribbons), by the title of Blackbeard. He was as renowned in love as in war, and is said to have had, at one time, as many as fourteen wives, scattered about in his various rendezvous. He haunted the coast of the colonies from New Jersey to Florida, and the islands of the West Indies were among his favorite resorts. He also frequented the Delaware River and Bay, along the shores of which he was thought to have buried immense quantities of treasure; and at one time he is said to have contemplated an attack on Philadelphia. Many of his revels took place in the house of an old Swedish woman at Marcus Hook. He was killed in a conflict off the coast of Virginia in the year 1717.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

PART FIRST.

Down the Delaware, some miles
From the salt air of the Bay,
Where the mighty stream still whiles
Slumberingly along his way,
Stands the little town which took
Somehow the name of Marcus Hook.

Founded by the blue-eyed Swede
Was it in the days of old,
When o'er forest, flood and mead
Ruled John Printz, the governor bold,
And the music of the drum
Echoed over Tinicum.

Empty is the village street
On this wild September night,
All deserted by men's feet,
Though the winds are in their might,
When, in groups of three or four,
Come some figures up the shore.

From the misty river-places,
Where the fish-hawk has his home,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

With their cloaks about their faces,
Like conspirators they come,
Striding through the rainy night
Toward the tavern's glimmering light.

How the equinoctial blows!
Down about the salty capes,
Where the wrecker's beacon glows,
Early morning shipwrecked shapes
Shall discover, cold and wan,
Thinks Dame Rambo of "The Swan."

Daughter of a Norseman she,
Who with Minuit sought this shore,
Wandering over land and sea,
As his sires had done of yore,
And by Delaware's brown flood
Learned to calm his viking blood.

Little cares she for the gale,
Slam of shutter, dash of rain,
Drawing for her patrons ale
Thor himself would not disdain,
Such as once, 'mid song and story,
Foamed o'er Thule's hills in glory.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Later points the ancient clock,
 Standing grimly by the wall;
"Ten"—its wizard bells now knock
 In their tower so dark and tall;
Few the guests that still remain,
When a sound comes from the rain:

Steps and voices—those of men—
 Shaking out of storm-drenched cloaks
On the tavern porch—and then
 In the door, with beard which smokes
From the wet, tempestuous night,
Walks a figure to the light.

Tall and most fantastic dressed—
 Round his shoulders drawn a cape—
Scarlet had it been at best,
 Now, about his lusty shape,
Like a sea-waif, breaker-flung,
Faded by the wave it hung.

Tied in knots with ribbons gay
 Was the sable beard he wore;
Bright he smiled (so gleams the day
 Through dark clouds when tempests roar)

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Bowed, and from his low-bent head
Took a cap bizarre: then said:

“Madam, to your goodly cheer
 Could I bring my comrades in?
Wild the night outside and drear.
 From the storm’s on-coming din
Took we refuge in the bay.
Sailors are we, frank and gay.”

From the tables where they sat,
 Hard the village gossips stared;
In their hands the ale grew flat,
 But no word nor sign they dared
As Dame Rambo to the tall
Guest replied: “Be welcome all!”

Then, in costumes bright and strange,
 With a foreign air about them,
As though, in their merry range,
 Few the seas had been without them,
Came these mariners, no man
Knew from whence, into “The Swan.”

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

PART SECOND.

How they drank the bitter ale!

How their bonny beards did wag!
Like the berserks, bold and hale,

Who beneath some forebear's flag
Once held Yule-tide revelries,
Seemed they to Dame Rambo's eyes.

Midnight—struck the old Norse clock;

Louder rang the jovial laugh;
More than any of his wild flock

Did the gay first-comer quaff;
Sitting near the fire-place wide,
With a beaker by his side.

Red the flames shone on his face;

Lit a belted dagger's hilt;
"Madam," quoth he, "by your grace
I a sailor's song will lilt."

Then, with pantomime which ran
With his singing, he began.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

SONG.

1.

“Down in the sea-sands,
Where the gull screams,
Buried by my hands,
Bright treasure gleams.
O'er it a pale ghost
Hovers for ever;
Him from his mammon
Death cannot sever;
Where his gold glittered
Aye was his soul;
Therefore I killed him
To guard it from mole—
Killed him to guard it
From man and from mole.

2.

“I a gallant am
For whom doves wrangle;
In my beard's meshes
Sweet hearts I tangle.
Far in Barbados,
Where grows the cane,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Seven lovely lady-birds
Deck I with gain.
Five in the Carolines,
Three here I kiss;
Wedded with priest-book
Each one, I wis—
Wedded with candles
And priest-book, I wis.

3.

“I am the pirate,
Blackbeard, the rover.
Under my red flag
I skim the seas over.
Keen is my cutlass,
Cold as my heart
When against foemen
Bear I my part.
But when from fair hands
Bubbles the cheer,
Who more benign
Than the bold buccaneer—
Gay and benign
Than the bold buccaneer?”

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Silent for a moment's space

Was the tavern when he ceased,
Save that still, outside the place,
Roared the tempest from the east,
Then—a bacchanalian sound—
Went the rovers' plaudits round.

Pale the villagers with fright.

This the Blackbeard and his crew,
Of whose deeds the pitchy night
Was the only emblem true?
This the pirate who along
All the coast had stamped his wrong?

But in old Dame Rambo's eyes

Calmly shone their wonted light;
Terror weak she did despise;
Courage was her race's right;
Something even did she ken
Which she loved in these wild men.

And when from his fire-lit seat—

While the others round him stand—
Rose the captain to his feet,
With a beaker in his hand,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Smiled she, as each sea-dog hale
Drank her health in nut-brown ale.

Then, while every gossip wondered,
From beneath his scarlet cape
Blackbeard drew a bag, and sundered
All its tightly-twisted tape.
Lo, what gold and silver bright
Lay before Dame Rambo's sight!

"Madam, ere once more we fly
O'er the deep, take this souvenir;
Never, under any sky
Have we tasted better cheer—
I and my bold corsair band."
Thus he spoke, with cap in hand.

Low he bowed, as when he entered:
"Now, my merry men, away!"
On them were all gazes centered
Till were gone their figures gay;
And "The Swan's" lamps dimly shone
On the villagers alone.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

IX

THE DREAM OF ISAAC THE QUAKER

While Isaac and his wife were under exercise and concern of mind about so weighty an undertaking (removing to America), and desirous that best wisdom should direct, Isaac had a dream or vision to this import: That having landed with his family in America, he traveled a considerable distance back into the country until he came to a valley, through which ran a pretty stream of water. The prospect and situation of the place seemed pleasant—a hill rising on the north and a fine spring issuing near its foot; and in his dream he thought that there he and his family must settle, though then a wilderness and unimproved. *Records of Friends' Meeting, London-grove, Chester Co., Pennsylvania.*

O spirit of that Quaker sire of mine,

To whom God gave these lovely Chester lands,
These fertile fields, where golden harvests shine,

These meadows green, where the herd, grazing,
stands,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Be with me now, and stretch thy blessing hands
Above me, that I may have grace to tell
That story which thy children love so well!

Born of a martyr race whose suffering veins
Had poured their life out under Mary's rule,
Within his soul that trust which never wanes,
That zeal which persecution cannot cool,
Isaac loved God, and through the bitter school
Of harsh intolerance held the Father's hand,
And heard the music of the better land.

And on one night in summer, when the moon
Made all the landscape like a phantasm seem,
And earth lay hushed, as though an angel soon
Would step from Heaven, like those in Jacob's
dream,
There came to Isaac, down a mystic beam
Of moonlight, or in some diviner way,
A vision beautiful as Eden's day.

Appeared a peaceful vale, (through which a stream,
Meandering flowed, sparkling beneath heaven's
light;)

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Sheltered upon the north, so seemed his dream,
By a green hill, some future homestead's site;
Thence issued, from a spring, the streamlet bright.
And even as Isaac gazed a voice he heard
Like that which once to Moses spoke the Word.

“Arise, there is a home beyond the seas,
Which thou hast seen this night, for thee and
thine;
There, through the depths of the primeval trees,
My sun shall light thee, and my moon shall shine;
Still shalt thou, of my omnipresence sign,
Behold the stars of midnight blazon me;
Fear not, but know that ever I am with thee.”

When Isaac woke he saw above the lea,
Descending in the occidental sky,
Morning's pale moon; and heard the psalmody
Of the early birds, in joyous choirs on high;
And in his soul he knew that God was nigh;
And knelt; and round him, in that hour divine,
He felt the glory of Jehovah shine.

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Then toward that spot, forever, seemed to point
The hand of God where Penn's sweet wisdom
ruled;

That spot which Love and Freedom did anoint
As refuge for all men, however schooled;
Where from the fires of scorn the Quaker cooled
His mystic brows; and in whose peace, anew,
Dwelt seer and scholar, infidel and Jew.

So Isaac, reverent, rose; and, with his home,
Beloved wife and children, round him still,
Crossed, as had others, those wild fields of foam,
Those wind-swept waters, where the sea-bird shrill
Chanted to ears which loved the sky-lark's trill.
At last, one summer evening, lo, the Capes!
The smell of land! The visions fancy shapes!

Came next the broad-spread river, and the shores
Of oak and hemlock, and the red-brick town;
And boats of landing, on whose dripping oars
The sunshine turned to gold the waters brown.
But in his soul a voice he could not drown
Spoke unto Isaac ever: "Not yet, not yet;
On, till thine eyes the promised spot have met!"

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Then through the depths of the primeval trees,
As God had bidden him, the Quaker went;
From unknown lands he felt the western breeze
Blow fresh and fragrant, as by kind Heaven sent
To lead him onward; and when evening blent
The glories of the sunset for her crown,
Through silent woods the thrush's song came down.

Few homes were here, but hospitable hands
Recalled, in each, the England of his sires;
And on the third night came he to some lands
Whose aspect woke within him prescient fires;
And when, above the forest's mighty spires,
Uprose the morning sun, he saw the stream,
The spring, the hill, the valley of his dream!

Then on the soul of Isaac fell a light
As from the everlasting throne of God;
And, to the world external blinded quite,
He knelt, in silent prayer, upon the sod.
Lifted, henceforth, was persecution's rod;
While ample harvests bounteous nature bore.
Still from these hills his children Heaven adore!

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

X

KELPIUS'S HYMN

John Kelpius, the well-known hermit and mystic of the Wissahickon, was a believer in the near approach of the Millennium; and, according to Watson, once told Alexander Mack, the Tunker preacher, of Germantown, that he expected to live to see it. In a letter to a friend he speaks of observing carefully all celestial phenomena, such as "meteors, stars, and various colors of the sky; if, peradventure, you may behold at last an harbinger."

1.

O God, thy moon is on the hills,
Thy stars are in the sky,
Thy Spirit this mortal vessel fills,
I feel the end is nigh;
Swift meteors flame across the north,
The golden planets wheel and sink,
Soon steps thy trumpet-angel forth
From Heaven's eternal brink;
Then peace illumes these warlike ways,
Christ's joyful chiliad has its birth,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

A round of Eden's perfect days,
Thy kingdom comes upon the earth!

2.

My eyes are dim, my hands are weak,
My soul is scarred with sin,
But day and night thy Word I seek,
That I a crown may win;
Cleanse thou and make my spirit pure
As are the spirits of thy saints,
Like them in bliss would I endure,
When earthly body faints;
Far up on Heaven's resplendent height
I hear the circling cherubs sing,
As downward to this world of night
The New-Jerusalem they bring!

(

XI

INDIAN ROCK: WISSAHICKON

1.

I lay upon a rock gray with the length
Of periods stretching back beyond all men,
And trimmed with curious lichen, and whose strength

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Had seen strange sights and doings, I thought
then.

Tall—still—all round the green-leafed forest stood,
Save where the rock pushed up and saw the West,
There, in the gap, carved of some common wood,
And painted red, and like an Indian dressed,
A figure standing o'er the vales beneath at rest.

2.

The sunset streamed upon him: round the rock
The warm light lay, and lit the gap, and shot
Long lances in the wood on bush and stock.
He stood as in the days which now are not,
Of mighty hunts, and wars, and camp-fires splendid,
And seeming almost human in the glow,
Ay, superhuman, from that land descended
Of fierce, accoutered ghosts who, to and fro,
Chase ever over mystic hills the antlered foe.

3.

A legend of a time of dwindling tribes,
And dying camp-fires up and down the land,
And loss of all the savage mind imbibes
As dearest, and the flight of many a band

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Toward green-armed forests far within the West;
Of spiritless hunts by broken-hearted men,
Who felt a dread, and stopped, and sideways pressed,
The branches back, and saw the stranger's den,
Then quickly sought their native wilderness again.

4.

Here, through the early twilight of the wood,
And followed closely by dark lines of braves,
And, after intervals, by more, who stood
Silent, within the forest's mighty naves,
Came he, the king, who felt the breezes free
Blow from the sunset o'er lands once for him—
Proud chieftain of the Lenni-Lenape—
And went up on the rock, from spaces dim,
Into a place sun-lit, nor masked by bush nor limb.

5.

The never-ending forest breathed around him,
And stretched itself o'er hills, or lay asleep
In sheltered vales by that sweet stream which bound
him
Unto her like her child. Adown the steep,
Looking through hundred-branched oaks, and sprays

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

Of hemlock, sea-dyed, tipped with lighter green,
And like the curve of wave on sunny days,
He saw her waters drift, and then unseen
Awhile, run out, and far away, long hills between.

6.

The dying sun burned on his swarthy face,
Then sank and left him, standing stern and still,
Like that red figure which, in this lone place,
Now broods and watches, set by some kind skill.
Behind, one with his hand upon the crag,
And others grouped near by, so wildly dressed,
His braves, long-limbed: and here a witch-faced hag,
And there a mother with her children rest,—
Last remnant of the tribe to follow toward the
West.

7.

The chieftain turned, the vales looked up and saw
Him slowly moving from them—cruel Fate!
A new moon glittered on his hatchet's claw,
Then kissed the savage rock left desolate.
They rose, his band of Lenni-Lenape,
They followed him, they crossed the woods by
night,

SONGS OF NEW-SWEDEN

In single, silent file like ghosts that flee:

They disappeared forever from the sight

Of these sweet streams and hills, their and their
leader's right.

EPILOGUE

The sunset burns upon the river,
Its glories fade and die,
But up the paths of night come ever
The children of the sky.
So, when the light of olden days
Sinks from before men's eyes,
Fair visions, up the spirit's ways,
Like stars of Heaven, arise.

O vernal land! O river strand,
Beside whose waving reed,
Two hundred years ago, did stand
The cottage of the Swede!
Would that these lips, alas, so dumb,
Could sing your minstrelsy
As, from the distant past, doth come
Its music unto me!



TRISTRAM AND MARGARET



INTRODUCTION

1.

Tristram, the poet, when he died,
(Sad was that snowy Christmas-tide)
Bequeathed a book of verse to me,
For brothers in the art were we.
And in this book his hand had set
His love for the fair Margaret—
His love, his joy, his golden day,
His grief when she had passed away.

2.

A love like that, his seemed to be,
Of Orpheus for Eurydice,
Which ceased not when her spirit through
Death's portals passed, but stronger grew.
And all distraught, o'er land and sea,
He wandered, steeped in misery,
Till in a dream, like blessed weird,¹

¹ *Weird*. In the Norse mythology, one of the Three Norns or Fates: also the protecting spirit or guardian angel who attends every human being from birth till death.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

Fair Margaret to him appeared,
Whose words of comfort brought surcease
Of sorrow, and celestial peace.

3.

And long I kept the book, and long
Pondered upon this plaintive song—
Whether to give it light of day?
Or let it pass to dust away?
But in the end it seemed to me
Better to set the captive free.
For though the song was one of dole,
Yet oft some sorrow-stricken soul
Finds comfort deep in such a strain,
Which seems to voice his own heart-pain,
And, voicing it, to somewhat free
His spirit from its misery,
And, for a little time, surcease
Of woe to give, and sad-eyed peace.

4.

This lenient view at last I took;
So, gentle reader, here's the book.

PRELUDE

As poet Dante once, 'tis said,
Did Beatrice's portrait paint;
As Raphael once, for his soul's saint,
To write the sonnet sweet was led;

Each leaving his familiar art,
When mighty love his life enthralled,
To tread where other Muses called,
Though kindred, to his beating heart;

So would, O Margaret, that I
Could summon music's aid divine,
And in some opera sweet enshrine
Our love, or plaintive symphony.

But God, who gives to each his gift,
Hath given me not that magic art;
And—more familiar tongue—my heart
To thee in poesy's line I lift.



I
LOVE

1.

Why do my eyes grow dim with tears
When rises from its grave the Past,
And, in that light by memory cast,
Fair as Elysium's Fields appears?

Is it because, ah, never more
Can I, on earth, re-walk that land,
From whose each-day-receding strand
Time bears me seaward with swift oar?

Is it because, ah, never more,
I dream, such hours can come again,
Transfigured by love's joy and pain,
And wise but with the lover's lore?

Who knows? Like Adam looking back
Upon the groves of Paradise
I stand, then forward bend my eyes,
Once more, along the appointed track.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

2.

Say first, O Muse, what reason moved
Thy son this elegy to make?
Hope that his spirit's grief 'twould break;
Grief for the loss of her he loved.

For what seemed life without her love?
Or earth when vanished was her face?
Thrice desolate was every place
Where her dear feet were wont to move!

O Margaret, once mine, now lost,
Yet still mine, true and tender heart,
To thee belongs, where'er thou art,
This record of our love so crost.

Fate rules our lives; howe'er we plan
We cannot do the thing we would;
God in His wisdom calls it good:
Our eyes are but the eyes of man.

3.

Thy figure rises from the past,
I hear thy voice across the years,

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

As in the long-ago appears
Thy face, I see thee as thou wast.

I see thee as thou wast, I hold
Thy loving form against my heart,
I dream that we shall never part,
I live once more the days of old.

Before me, southward looking, spread
Cerulean waves—the Mexic sea,
Delicious airs envelop me,
The mocking-bird sings overhead.

Oft on this beach of snowy sand
We walked, beneath the August moon,
Or, in the golden-visaged noon,
Sat, by the great gulf's breezes fanned.

4.

Go back, my heart, into that Past,
Among the faces that have been!
Re-view the semi-tropic scene!
Re-live the hours we hoped would last!

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

Re-love, re-suffer, that I may sing
 Fitley, sweet English rose, of thee,
 Who to the shore of Mexic's sea
The beauty of thy isle didst bring!

O'er Pensacola's moon-lit bay
 We rowed, forgetful of Time's flight;
 Delightful was the balmy night
After the splendor of the day.

Thou in the deep thy hand didst lave,
 Reigned silence save the slow oar's sound,
 Bright shone the phosphorescence round,
The porpoise leaped from out the wave.

5.

O day of days, when first I knew
 Thy loving woman's heart was mine;
 Round that sweet memory will I twine
Immortelles such as earth ne'er grew!

O'er the long bayou, clear and deep,
 We rowed, the morning smiled above;
 Only the moss-hung cypress-grove,
Bowling in silence, seemed to weep.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

O'er the long bayou, clear and deep,
We rowed, the evening flamed above;
Our lives were knit by vows of love,
None saw the moss-hung cypress weep.

O day of days, when first I knew
Thy loving woman's heart was mine;
Round that sweet memory will I twine
Immortelles such as earth ne'er grew!

II

BETROTHAL

1.

Come dearest, in this hammock's net
Let's dream the happy hours away,
For ne'er returns this summer's day,
And we must love who now have met.

The roses revel in the sun,
The cactus guards thy cottage door,
The mocking-bird his song sings o'er
As though he never would be done.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

And hear, from Santa Rosa's isle,
The murmuring surf upon the strand;
Old ocean wooes the blooming land,
Who meets his kisses with a smile.

Then come, and in this hammock's net
Let's dream the happy hours away,
For ne'er returns this summer's day,
And we must love who now have met.

2.

O southern night! My ravished eyes
Refuse to leave this perfect scene;
Transfigured by the full moon's sheen,
Prosaic earth like dream-land lies.

Come dearest, down this avenue
Of moss-hung live-oaks let us stray;
Midnight, when you are near, is day;
Noonday is midnight without you.

No English nightingales here sing,
But well-loved voices are not still;
Your mocking-bird, my whip-poor-will,
Their music to our garden bring.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

O eyes, ye deem 'tis Luna's light
Which thus transfigures heaven and earth,
But what would Luna's light be worth
If Love were banished from this night?

III

PARTING

1.

But came a time when cruel Fate
Our lives divided, Margaret.
Better, it seemed, we ne'er had met
Than thou and I left desolate.

No more for us the kiss, the sigh,
The clasp of hands, the sweet embrace;
To-night we linger, face to face,
To-morrow we must say good-by.

O bitter word! O hour of pain
That bears thee from my arms away!
How shall I pass each dreary day?
When shall I hear thy voice again?

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

The vessel leaps to meet the flood;
One kiss, my darling, ere we part;
Thy sad eyes speak a sadder heart—
I think my own is dropping blood.

IV

ABSENCE

1.

Still rises from the wave the sun,
And floods the land with golden light;
Still hangs the moon, a crescent bright,
O'er the pine-wood, when day is done.

Still roses in thy garden bloom,
And honeysuckles scent the air;
Still mocking-birds, a chorus rare,
Break with their songs the midnight's gloom.

But what to me is bayou blue,
Or piney wood, or grove of oak?
Gone are those gentle lips which spoke
Love's language passionate and true.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

Aye, what to me is day or night,
Or set of sun, or rise of moon,
Speed will I from this desert soon,
And stretch my restless wings in flight.

2.

Canst tell me, darling, why my heart
Cleaves but to thee, to thee alone?
Why life is void when thou art gone,
Save that I feel pain's ruthless dart?

A hundred maidens round me smile,
With tresses brown, or locks of gold;
Thy image only I behold,
Proof against each siren's wile.

When on my couch at night I lie
I dream thou retest in my arms,
That I protect thee from all harms,
That thou art mine until I die.

None other woman fills thy place,
Can fill thy place within my heart;
My cross it is that we must part,
That I must live without thy face.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

3.

Evening descends 'mid wind and rain.
Within my fire-lit room, where flit
Shadows unceasingly, I sit;
Like shadows cross my heart and brain.

By day and night, in work and dream,
Or when I sleep, or when I rise,
Thou haunt'st me with those tearful eyes,
A ghost e'er-present thou dost seem.

Weeping, thou pointest to the past.
I see the garden where we met;
I hear—but could I e'er forget—
Our vows to love while life should last.

O darling, were but Fate more kind,
Soon would I seek thy loving breast;
In that sweet haven would I rest,
My arms about thee closely twined.

4.

Would that my eyes could see, to-night,
O Florida, thy dark-green pines,

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

With white sand underfoot, which shines
Like snow beneath the full-moon's light!

Thy bayous, where the wild ducks fly
Above the land-surrounded wave,
And red-eyed alligators lave,
Or on the sunny beaches lie!

Or would that I could hear the sea
Once more on Santa Rosa's Isle
Break, thundering in the distance, while
His humid breath envelops me,

And, from the gulf blown inland, showers,
Profuse, impetuous, tropical,
Upon the earth, with lightnings, fall,
And bloom the early spring's first flowers!

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

V

DEATH

1.

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,
The priest above the grave hath said.
No more on earth we see our dead.
We drink the cup because we must.

Why, darling, did we ever meet?
Why did I ever thy dear face
Behold? Why clasp in long embrace
Thy loving form, so maiden-sweet,

If thou so soon from out these arms—
My other half—wast to be torn?
What life than his is more forlorn
Which only memory's sunshine warms?

O Love, is then thy only end
The bitter tear, the breaking heart?
Rather than that we two should part,
Death, Father, to me also send.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

2.

'Tis Christmas-tide. Can I rejoice
When vacant is on earth thy place?
What is the world without thy face?
And what is life without thy voice?

Aye aches my heart; my eyes are wet;
Pulsates my brain with wild unrest.
Thrice bitter now those visions blest
Of hours which I can ne'er forget.

Aimless, I wander through the street;
The snow falls fast; 'tis Christmas night;
Fast falls the snow; the earth is white;
No comfort find my stricken feet.

O Fate! I reel before thy thrust!
I feel the iron in my soul!
I seek relief in chants of dole—
I utter these because I must.

3.

As Sidney sang of Stella; as
Petrarch, in passionate Italy,

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

Sang Laura; so I sing of thee,
O Margaret, and our love that was.

But not like minne-singer glad,
In careless-hearted youth, I sing;
Rather 'tis to thy feet I bring
A hymn—thou saint, I pilgrim sad.

A strain half joy, half pain, alas;
A carol half, half elegy;
This is the song I bring to thee,
In memory of our love that was.

That was, and is, and ever shall be—
For though thou dwell'st in sphere divine,
Yet is my spirit joined with thine,
And is thy spirit half of me.

4.

Still flows the Mississippi: still
Shines on its waves the summer moon:
And once again I hear the tune
Of mocking-bird and whip-poor-will.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

This is the garden where we stood,
The gate at which we kissed good-by.
I seek them out—I scarce know why.
To think o'er happier days—what good?

This is the place: but here no more
Her gentle presence waits for me.
A thousand leagues across the sea
She sleeps, upon her England's shore.

Down bitter tears! Think'st thou, my heart,
That none, save thee, have griefs to bear?
All human-kind thy lot can share,
For sorrow is life's greater part.

VI

TRAVEL

1.

What pain is this which wrings my heart?
What tears are these which fill my eyes?
As o'er the deep our vessel flies,
And from their caves the wild winds start.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

Once more my youthful days appear,
Once more I live love's halcyon hours,
And, through the gale which o'er us lowers,
Thine accents, Margaret, I hear.

Can I, with globe-encircling tour,
Crowd out the memory of thy face?
Can I thy gracious form displace
With bacchic cup, or gay amour?

Ah no, though varied lands I roam,
One Heaven I see above me shine;
And o'er the houri's song and wine
Thou reign'st in thy immortal home.

2.

Ah no, though varied lands I roam,
A vision rises from the past—
That south-land where my lot was cast
For many years! My spirit's home!

Once more each well-remembered scene,
Conjured by memory's hand, I view;
Here Florida, sea-rimmed with blue,
There Louisiana's lowlands green.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

Once more I see the live-oaks stand
In many a fair and stately row;
Once more I feel the sea-wind blow
O'er Santa Rosa's snow-white sand.

O land of cane and cotton; land
Of bayou blue, and green pine wood;
Of Mississippi's yellow flood;
Beneath thy sky I fain would stand!

3.

I do remember one wild night
When home I came the forest through,
Impatient, for my spirit knew
That in thy window burned a light.

Loud sang the tempest; black the air
Round me, as through the pines I rode;
Horse-led, save when the lightning showed
A pathway, with its sudden glare.

Loud sang the tempest; but ne'er erred
The faithful steed I could not teach;
Pounding upon the distant beach,
The breakers of the Gulf I heard.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

And in my heart the fire of love
Burned brightly through the dreary storm,
Lit by her eyes whose vestal form
Kept vigil in the live-oak grove.

4.

That time comes back! Almost I feel
The rain-drops falling on my face;
Almost my eyes can see the place
Where thou didst wait, so sweetly leal;

Almost the swashing of the bay,
The thunder's distant growl I hear,
As to the long bridge we drew near,
My horse and I, and wished 'twere day.

Unmated still, I sing thy name,
Sweet Margaret; and if my rhymes
Discourse of loves in other climes,
Always 'tis but a passing flame;

Not like that early passion strong
Which Fate o'erwhelmed with mandate dread;
Before whose thrust my spirit bled,
And, wounded, sought a cry—this song.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

VII

THE DREAM

1.

Sleeping on Philæ's sacred isle,
Where rose, in mighty Egypt's past,
The temple of Osiris vast,
Girt by the waters of the Nile,

I had a dream wherein I sought,
On earth, the face of Margaret,
Her whom my heart would not forget,
Who to my life such joy had brought:

I had a dream wherein I sought,
O'er land and sea, my Margaret,
But never had our spirits met,
And life without her love seemed naught.

"She dwells not, then, on earth," I said,
"But to some other sphere has gone."
And, in my dream, I sought, alone,
The mystic regions of the dead.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

2.

Uproll impenetrable veil
Which parts us from another world!
Curtain inscrutable hang furled
Which covers this terrestrial pale!

That I may sing of things unseen,
Unseeable by earthly eye;
Of crowded realms which round us lie,
Where dwell the peoples that have been.

The world of spirits: high above,
In heavens, the holy angels dwell;
While deep below, from hell to hell,
Unsatisfied, the devils rove.

I leave our sphere of human lore,
I cross the bounds of birth and death,
I draw in spirit-land my breath,
I seek a spirit gone before.

3.

What hall mysterious and vast
Is this, where shades unnumbered wait?

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

The chamber of Osiris great,
Who sits in judgment on the past;

Who scans the record of each life,
And parts its evil from its good;
Who weighs the cruel deed of blood
Against the love for child and wife;

Who knows the secrets of the heart,
The traitorous crime, the act of shame;
Who vice and virtue calls by name,
And writes each on a page apart;

Who finds the sum of good and ill,
And strikes a balance on his scales;
Who sends some to Elysium's vales,
And others Tartarus to fill.

4.

Now when into that place I came
Where sits in judgment on the soul
Osiris, he from his dread scroll
Uplooked, and spoke me thus by name:

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

“How camest thou, Tristram, here, while yet
The tints of earth pervade thy face?
Here, of departed spirits place,
Where mortals few the foot have set?”

Then I: “O King Osiris, let
Thy servant stay, and grant his prayer;
On earth I loved a maiden fair,
I seek the soul of Margaret.”

And he, while on me bent their eyes
His forty-two assessors¹ dark:
“In Heaven that spirit thou wilt mark,
Enter, the way before thee lies.”

5.

As pass our souls from dream to wake,
(Which at one moment dream-land see,
The earth the next) so, instantly,
Unbodied souls their journeys make.

And so, from Sheol's shadowy hall,
When me its king did not deny,

¹ Osiris, in the religion of the ancient Egyptians, was believed to be assisted in his judicial duties by forty-two assessors.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

I passed, in twinkling of an eye,
To that bright realm which Heaven we call.

And, while I round me gazed, as yet
Unused to the celestial place,
Close to my side I saw the face,
I heard the voice of Margaret:

“Beloved, camest thou from the earth,”
She said, “me to rejoin in Heaven?
To mortals few that power is given,
But thou wast daring from thy birth.”

6.

A gown of snowy white she wore,
With round her waist a zone of gold,
A fillet did her hair infold,
A lotus in her hand she bore.

“Darling,” I cried, “thee upon earth
I loved, and loved thee still in Heaven;
For this that power to me was given,
Though yet a child of mortal birth.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

“As through the realms of spirit-land
Sought Orpheus his Eurydice,
So, led by love immortal, thee
I sought, that I might touch thy hand,

“And know that thou, though lost to earth,
Didst dwell, an angel fair, in Heaven;
That Death, a gate to mortals given,
Is but to other Life the birth.”

7.

“The soul dies not,” she said, “but lives
For ever; this, in every age,
Have taught the prophet and the sage;
Death but the earthly dwelling rives;

“And some day thou shalt come to me,
Beloved, and, for ever, dwell
With me in fields of asphodel;
But I shall not return to thee.

“The ways of Him who dwells above,
From whom the universes flow,
The Eternal One, thou canst not know:
Let this suffice thee—God is Love.”

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

As angels speak to men she spoke;
Then on my forehead pressed a kiss;
And even while with celestial bliss
My spirit trembled—I awoke.

VIII

BY THE MISSISSIPPI

1.

Knowest thou where Mississippi's flood
Is arched by Louisiana's skies?
Hallowed that land unto my eyes,
For here with Margaret I stood.

In early spring, when blows the wind
Of March across my native hills,
May weather all this region fills,
And flowers on every hand we find.

Here royal roses greet the sight,
And tempt the smell with perfumes rare;
Here orange-blossoms fill the air
With scents delicious all the night.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

Years is it since on this river-shore,
Sweet Margaret, where now I stand,
One night we lingered, hand in hand,
And kissed, with tears, to meet no more.

2.

Aye, years it is; but as I stray
(While moon and stars above me gleam)
By the broad Mississippi's stream,
Almost it seems like yesterday;

For every feature of the scene
Recalls that happy time now gone,
And though I seem to be alone,
Her spirit walks with me the green.

Still from the ferry to the gate
The foot-path by the river winds;
Still sweet with flowers her lover finds
That spot where she was wont to wait;

And still, beyond those wharves of wood,
Like giants which the waters breast,
The steam-boats of the great South-west
Pass and repass upon the flood.

TRISTRAM AND MARGARET

FINALE

O memory when, with magic hand,
Thou touch'st the vista of the past,
Arcadia we behold at last,
Or Beulah's half-celestial land!

For as the sun, or silver moon,
Transfigure with their heavenly sheen
Earth's landscapes, and some darksome scene
Change to a thing of beauty soon,

So dost thou, O benignant Power,
Paint, on the highway of each life,
With roseate hues the scars of strife,
And gild the clouds which o'er it lower,

And when, with retrospective eyes,
We gaze upon that wreck-strewn path,
The spot where swept the tempest's wrath
Behold thy hand now glorifies!



PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE



DEDICATION

Belovèd bride, whom my dear mother blessed
With saintly hands, ere from this world she passed
Into that other; dying with happy eyes
That thou wast left to me: belovèd wife,
Of God the gift, to thee I dedicate
This poem of my earlier wandering years,
When yet I knew thee not; to thee, who since,
Companion sweet, hast sailed with me those seas,
Hast trodden those shores, where Penrhyn roamed
alone:

Take thou these verses, and if in them lives
Aught of the beauty which they strive to paint,
Of nature and of art in Orient climes,
Keep then, in memory of our happy hours
In that far East—the lotus-land of earth.

1894.



PRELUDE

O Muse that, in my days of youth,
I, Penrhyn, sought in field and wood,
Once more, with thee as mentor good,
In verse I'd mirror nature's truth.

On distant seas, in alien lands,
Long wont to roam, I knew thee not;
Almost thine accents I forgot,
The ministrations of thy hands.

But now once more, the clouds among,
Goddess, thy flight I hear thee winging;
Knight-errant I, whom thy sweet singing
Lures to the fairy-land of song.

Help thou my thought, guide thou my hand,
That I no idle thing may write;
Bless thou the song I now indite—
My wanderings over sea and land.



CANTO FIRST

I

OCCIDENT TO ORIENT

1.

City of kith and kin, farewell!

It will be months, it may be years,

Ere once again, through wanderer's tears,

I hail thy beauty—who can tell?

Away! the westward-rolling sun

Beckons us, we are his perforce;

Him must we follow in his course;

Across a continent we run.

The Alleghanies, white with snow,

The Mississippi's mighty flood,

The prairies, with their tales of blood,

We reach, we pass them, as we go.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Away—away! The rumbling car
Flies onward toward the Golden Gate;
Before me lands untraveled wait,
Behind me friends and kinsmen are.

2.

Behind me kinsmen are and friends,
The mighty ocean lies before,
To-morrow from this rock-bound shore
Its waves shall bear me to earth's ends.

O heart, almost, in this last hour,
Thou seek'st to evade my cherished plan
To view the varied lands where man
Displays his civilizing power.

O feet, that foreign soil ne'er pressed,
Almost ye dread my dear design
To cross that far meridian's line
Which separates the East from West.

Hard is 't to part; and, mother dear,
Hardest of all to part from thee;
For since I sat upon thy knee
My life to thine has followed near.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

3.

The bell strikes noon; I hear the sound
Of farewell voices in the air;
And out the bay we go to where
The vast Pacific rims us round.

Tumultuous sea! Perhaps, far south,
In other latitudes, where came
The adventurous Spaniard first, thy name
Is no misnomer; but the mouth

That here salutes thee Peaceful, errs:
E'en as the Atlantic's boisterous rage,
Which wreck and ruin doth presage,
Is thine, and oft thy passion stirs.

Blow, blow, ye gales! Anon we flee,
Sail set, before your wintry smiles;
Anon we breast your buffets, whiles
A boiling caldron is the sea.

4.

The tempest all the welkin fills,
Aud fury stirs the mighty main,

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Upbroken is the ocean-plain
Into innumerable hills.

The decks are wet; upon the bridge
I see the bearded captain stand;
A son of Britain's sea-girt land,
He loves to leap from ridge to ridge.

The decks are wet; day after day
Through frenzied winds and waves we steer;
But singing at their work I hear
The hardy sailors of Cathay.

And though at night above my berth
Fall—many a ton in weight—the seas,
I lay me down with mind at ease,
And sleep as on the solid earth.

II

FIRST GLIMPSES OF JAPAN

Westward her course our vessel steams
Until we reach, at last, the East;
I wake at dawn, my soul to feast
On land before seen but in dreams.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Hail to thee, beautiful Japan!

Before my ocean-wearied eyes

Kadzusa's ¹ wooded hills now rise,

And snow-capped dome of Fuji-san.²

O sacred peak, when, far at sea,

Thy shape the mariner describes,

Like Bethlehem's host to the shepherds' eyes

Thou shinest, speaking peace to be!

Calm water now; up Yedo Bay

We stand for Yokohama town:

'Twas here the *Oneida's* ³ men went down,

'Twas there the fleet of Perry lay.

2.

Uraga,⁴ seven-and-twenty-years

Have passed since on thy harbor's breast

Anchored the squadrons of the West,

And woke the shogun's prescient fears.

No longer, like a knight of old,

Two-sworded, goes the samurai ⁵ forth;

From west to east, from south to north,

No longer rules the daimio ⁶ bold.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Gone are the days of old Japan,
When Iyeyasu ⁷ held the land,
And Iyemitsu's ⁸ iron hand
Drove out the strangers with a ban.

Changed are the times! For good or ill,
Who knows? God grant 'tis for the best!
But cradled on this blue bay's breast,
Nippon, recluse I dream thee still.

3.

For, as from off the magic screen,
An image which our hearts has won,
Cast by the stereopticon,
Fades, and no more by us is seen:

So, swiftly, from the eyes of man,
Have passed away the systems old,
The customs strange, the manners bold,
The life unique, of hoar Japan.

And though we praise, as wise and great,
Those who from Europe's shores have brought
New arts, new arms, new laws, and wrought
From feudal clans, a modern state;

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Yet fancy paints, with loving hand
The splendors of that golden age
When, with fair Yedo for their stage,
The Tokugawas ruled the land.

4.

On yonder hill, whose sunny crest
O'erlooks the waves of Yedo Bay,
O'erlooks, and gazes far away,
The ashes of Will Adams ⁹ rest.

A Briton bold who loved to roam,
He sailed these seas three centuries back,
And on this shore, from storm and wrack
Once resting, found a wife and home.

Ruler of Hemi's village fair,
His people's pride, his sovereign's friend,
He loved thee, Nippon, till life's end,
Nor breathed again far England's air.

An exile's grave, yet who can say
That corse a lovelier couch e'er prest,
Enshrined upon yon mountain's crest,
Above the waves of Yedo Bay.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

5.

'Tis night—through Yedo's crowded streets,
In man-drawn kuruma,¹⁰ I fly;
O ne'er from memory's page will die
The scene which now my vision greets!

The shops with paper lanterns lit,
The showman's booth, the shrine of saint,
The black-haired youths in costumes quaint,
The maids demure who past me flit.

Is this a dream? Or do I tread
Some distant planet, new and fair?
Unreal seems this midnight air,
This round moon shining overhead.

'Tis Nippon! 'Tis that once-hidden land
Twin-ruled by warrior and by priest!
'Tis the charmed door-step of the East,
On which my pilgrim feet now stand!

6.

Ye sirens of the sea, whose kiss
Aye lures me o'er the billows green,

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Say, in your wanderings have you seen
A land more beautiful than this?

Here flows the bright Sumida,¹¹ here
The plum-tree blooms in early spring,
And, later, cherry-blossoms fling
Their petals o'er the lakelet near.

Here nestles many a hamlet fair
The mountains and the sea between,
And from the level rice-lands green
Rises the white stork into air.

Here, in the cryptomeria grove,
The wooden Shinto¹² temple stands,
Plain as if built by Quaker hands
For orisons to God above.

7.

These are the Islands of the Blest,
Fertile and fair the landscape lies,
The winds are hushed along the skies,
The white-winged boats their pinions rest.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Before me spreads the dimpled bay,
 Behind me Yedo's peopled plain,
 Below me, in the shady lane,
Their games the happy children play.

I hear the music of the harp,
 The songs of damosels I hear,
 Who sit beside the lakelet clear,
Where dwell the tortoise and the carp.

And far to westward, like the throne
 Of one who rules these Blessed Isles,
 I see, above the sunset's smiles,
Fuji's incomparable cone.

8.

When shows above the ocean green
 Each morn the sun's refulgent face,
 Straight I betake me to that place
Where sacred Fuji best is seen.

Sometimes unbroken she uprears
 The outlines of her peerless cone;
 Sometimes her graceful peak alone,
Floating above the clouds, appears.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Sometimes the whirlwinds round her blow,
Hurled by the fiery summer's hands;
Sometimes in winter's garb she stands—
A stately pyramid of snow.

“Fuji-mi taira”¹³ have I named,
After the fashion of the land,
This terrace, where each morn I stand
And view that mount for beauty famed.

III

THE TEMPLES OF TOKIO

1.

Here rest, in mausoleums grand,
Seven of the Tokugawa blood;
Here once Zojoji's¹⁴ temple stood,
Founded by Iyeyasu's hand.

Here, sheltered from great Yedo's din,
Serenely beats the pulse of life;
Beyond these august groves is strife;
Peace and Religion reign within.

PENRRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

I stroll and gaze: through lacquered gate,
Past gorgeous shrine I make my way;
Thrice beautiful, this April day,
Are these tomb-temples of the great.

On tent-shaped roofs the sunlight falls;
The sweet air fills each spacious court;
Proud Shiba, Heaven and Earth consort
To gild thy mortuary walls!

2.

What spectacle is this? What fair
To which the men and maidens throng?
Where wrestler's shout, and geisha's ¹⁵ song
Re-echo through the jocund air:

Where musumes, ¹⁶ in coquetry wise,
Set saké ¹⁷ forth, or fragrant tea,
And praise our feats of archery,
As from each bow the arrow flies:

Where wondrous wax-works meet the eye,
And booths attract on every side;
And, lo, a temple's portal wide
Invites to prayer the passers-by:

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

What spectacle is this? Divine,
O traveler, if thou canst, the scene?
Pilgrims are these upon the green:
This is Asakusa's ¹⁸ famous shrine!

3.

Uyeno,¹⁹ when, through thy royal park,
On April days the people stray,
To view the cherry-blossoms gay
Which spring's arrival ever mark,

What picnic of my native land
Can with thy festival compare?
So glad the admiring groups, so fair
The cherry-flowers, the pines so grand.

For ever, in these Orient isles,
Pleasure, immortal goddess, reigns;
Nor prince nor peasant she disdains,
Alike on young and old she smiles.

O thou who, harassed on all hands,
Wouldst seek the earthly paradise,
To Nippon hie; with thine own eyes
Behold the happiest of earth's lands!

PENRRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

4.

But ere I leave thy classic plain,
Fair Yedo, let my simple verse
Gompachi's ²⁰ story sad rehearse—
Komurasaki's love and pain.

A samurai brave was he at first,
And she a maiden fair and good;
To buy her stricken parents food
She sold herself. O fate the worst!

He played the robber's cruel part
For gold wherewith his love to save;
He fell; and o'er Gompachi's grave
She plunged the dagger to her heart.

Like Abelard and Heloise,
Lovers unfortunate were they.
Now in Meguro rests their clay,
Beneath the waving bamboo-trees.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

IV

ON THE TOKAIDO ²¹

1.

Sing, Muse, the walk! With stick in hand,
And sun-hat swathed in summer white,
And figure clad in garments light,
On foot I journey through the land.

What pleasure can compare with this?
To tread the long brown road; to pierce
Deep woods; to cross the torrent fierce;
To feel, at times, the sea-wind's kiss;

To follow, over rice-fields green,
The path which leads one—who knows where?
To climb the mountain's winding stair;
To thread the valleys set between.

Away! From mountain, wood, and shore,
Nature extends her loving hands.
Behind me Nihom-Bashi ²² stands—
The long Tokaido lies before.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

2.

This is the king's high-road; from east
To west, by the blue sea, it winds;
And Tokio to Kioto binds,
As two are wedded by the priest.

Along this pathway, brave and vain,
Once strode the samurai, feared by all;
And where my alien feet now fall
Once swept the haughty daimio's train.

Here jogged the pilgrim toward his shrine,
'Neath summer's sun, through winter's blast;
Here, in his norimono,²³ passed
The kugé,²⁴ flushed with fish and wine.

Here, from his battles in the west,
Came Iyeyasu, marching home.
Yedo this eastern Cæsar's Rome,
Where, from their wars, his clansmen rest.

3.

In yonder grove, whose gilded fane,
Half-hidden, now meets the traveler's eye,

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

The immortal forty-seven lie.
Shall earth behold their like again?

Approach; but let no idle word,
No flippant phrase, profane the spot
Where died, with rites our race knows not,
That band whose tale the world has heard.

Still, by the path, springs, clear and deep,
The well in which the head was washed;
But where the ronins' swords once flashed,
Now seven-and-forty grave-stones weep.

Sengakuji,²⁵ from far and near,
The pilgrim seeks thine honored shrine;
To ponder o'er each marble's line,
Or pay the tribute of a tear.

4.

In Kamakura's ²⁶ groves of oak,
Imaged in bronze, the Buddha sits,
No pain o'er that calm forehead flits,
No pleasure from those lips e'er broke.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

But, wrapped in contemplation deep,
He views this world of will and fate,
Himself possessor of that state,
Not life nor death, not wake nor sleep.

O deity of perfect rest,
To thee, from many an Asian home,
Through centuries have the weary come,
The poor, the weak, the sick, the oppressed!

Sitting serene, whate'er betide,
Thou knowest not passion's strong control;
So in Nirvana dwells the soul,
From pain and pleasure purified.

V

MOUNT FUJI

1.

Canst sing, O Muse, that snowy height
Which, standing in the western skies,
Like the cloud-pillar to Israel's eyes,
Appears, each day, before my sight?

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

As o'er the Tokaido, stick in hand,
I journey toward Kioto's fanes,
It rises from Suruga's plains,
Leading me to the promised land.

Of thirteen provinces the light,
It shines, like Buddha, free from sin;
And, that Nirvana he may win,
The pilgrim climbs its summit bright.

O matchless mount, the centuries die
And, moldering, form the forgotten past;
But still thy wooded base stands fast,
Still thy white dome salutes the sky!

2.

At night I see thy snowy stair
Ascending through the circling storm;
At morn behold thy graceful form
Spring, like a flower, into the air.

Fuji, what hour beheld thy birth?
What century saw thy bringing forth?
For legends tell, from south to north,
The travail of thy mother earth.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

In Omi, in a single night,
Land sank, and Biwa's lake appeared;
While on Suruga's plain was reared,
From earth to heaven, thy sacred height.²⁷

'Mid such convulsions thou wast born
Who now, above me, sitt'st serene;
At morn I greet thy snowy sheen,
At night thou cheer'st me, travel worn.

3.

In heaven thou dwell'st, immortal queen,
Below thee are the homes of men,
And mortals strive, with brush and pen,
To limn the vision they have seen.

Worked in my lady's silken zone,
Of golden thread, thy semblance stands;
And on his clay, with loving hands,
The potter paints thy peerless cone.

On palace wall, and temple screen,
On vase of bronze, and lacquered shrine,
Whate'er the work thy graceful line,
Dear to all craftsmen's hearts, is seen.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

And the rapt poet, in despair
Of verse wherein thy charms to drape,
Beholds, in dreams, thy snowy shape
Hang, like a lily, in mid-air.

4.

Oft from my vision thou art hid
Until I climb some summit free;
Then, as Balboa hailed the sea,
I hail thy lonely pyramid.

Can Chimborazo's peak of snow
With thee in majesty compare?
Can Alps or Himalayas bear
The crown of beauty from thy brow?

Listen, thou mountain deity!
Goddess, whose throne is in the air!
As Paris once judged Venus fair,
Bestow I Venus' prize on thee.

Light of the East! Bride of the Sun!
Whose limbs the mists of morn now drape;
O he who ne'er beheld thy shape,
He knows not beauty, peerless one!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

VI

KIOTO

1.

Before me, couched upon her plain,
Girdled by hills, Kioto lies.
O sacred spot! Each pilgrim's eyes
Are raised to Heaven, then fall again.

Like Zion to the Hebrew seers,
Mecca to the Arab sick and faint,
Like Rome unto the Christian saint,
Kioto to these souls appears.

Holy the thousand silver rills
Which down her mountains slide and gleam;
Holy the Kamo-gawa's²⁸ stream;
Holy these temple-covered hills.

This is the heart of old Japan;
Here lives the genius of the land;
Before her gates two giants stand—
Atago-yama, Hiyei-zan.²⁹

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

2.

The heart of Nippon—aye, it is.

Here dwelt her rulers; here the men

Who gave her fame with brush and pen.

What other spot compares with this?

Here—fairest city of the East—

Rose, in the gold-and-purple past,

The temples beautiful and vast,

Where chants the satin-cassocked priest.

Here still the pilgrim comes to pray,

For nearer Heaven these hill-tops seem;

And, by the Kamo-gawa's stream,

Here still the poet sings his lay.

Here works the potter at his art,

Here bends the sword-smith o'er the sword;

Here, on grotesque or tragic board,

The player plays his mimic part.

3.

Ginkakuji,³⁰ in this chamber old,

Where now, from tiny cup, each drinks

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Uji's ³¹ delicious leaf, methinks
Sat once the Ashikaga bold:

And with him—O immortal three!—
His comrades tried of many a bout
Bacchanal, and voluptuous rout,
Monk Shuko, and gay So-Ami.

Like alchemists who mix with care
An elixir, each upon his mat,
In postures Nipponese, they sat,
And poured, with rites, this beverage rare.

Let's drink then to the immortal three,
Tea-lovers in the days of old;
To Yoshimasa, shogun bold,
Monk Shuko, and gay So-Ami!

4.

Turn now, my lingering feet, to where,
By its still lake, Kinkakuji ³² stands:
What sybarite brain conceived, what hands
Skillful upreared this structure rare?

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Five hundred years a change have wrought
Since Yoshimitsu, styled The Great,
Renounced the shogun's proud estate,
And in this spot retirement sought;

And (though in garb a warrior bold
No more, but monk with head shaved bare)
Built for himself a palace fair,
Fronting a summer-house of gold.

Gone is that palace; and thy walls
Time, O Kinkakuji, has not spared:
But almost is their sheen repaired
When here the light of sunset falls!

5.

Kioto, let my pilgrim pen
Proclaim the beauty of thy hills,
And, by the music of thy rills
Inspired, charm occidental men.

What spot on earth can vie with thee
When morning floods thy fertile plain,
And kneels, at Gion's ³³ hill-side fane,
The simple-hearted devotee?

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Or when, beneath thy sky of blue,
At noonday's golden hour I rove,
And, mounting past yon bamboo-grove,
From Kiyomidzu ³⁴ thee I view?

Or when, from Maruyama's heights,
I watch the moon's enchanting gleam,
While far below, on Kamo's stream,
Glitter a million festive lights? ³⁵

6.

O mountain-girdled queen, my heart
Turns to thee like a child of thine,
And as my fingers pen this line
I dream that we may never part;

But that I may, when cherry-flowers
Bedeck Arashiyama's ³⁶ side,
Upon the stream's gay surface glide
For many an April's happy hours;

Or that, with geishas young and fair,
I may, by Biwa's ³⁷ azure lake,
In oriental fashion take
My ease for many a summer rare;

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Or, when the proud chrysanthemum
 Blooms in Shugakuin's ³⁸ garden old,
 That I its beauty may behold,
For many an autumn day to come!

7.

Her samisen ³⁹ the maiden plays,
 Or dances in the tea-house cool,
 Or bathes within the crystal pool,
Half-hidden, only, from my gaze.

The freer life my spirit charms,
 The shackles of the West fall off,
 My helmet to the East I doff,
And follow fast her beckoning arms.

Aye, why from Eden should I fly,
 And face once more the troubled world?
 My anchor's down, my sails are furled,
Methinks here could I live and die:

Where loving skies upon me gaze,
 And zephyrs soft my senses greet,
 And where, in many a valley sweet,
Still dwells the Peace of ancient days.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

VII

AT THE TEMPLE OF KIYOMIDZU

'Tis morn on Kiyomidzu's height,
Where once the Taiko planned his war,⁴⁰
And from a book of Buddhist lore
I hear the holy priest recite.

Below I see the river lave
That city's feet he loves so well;
And o'er my spirit comes a spell
Like that the fabled lotus gave.

Rest—rest—here will I rest. What good
To climb, for aye, the rolling wave,
Like Greek Ulysses, till the grave
Descends upon the weary blood?

O rather, on this mountain side,
With some kind spirit would I dwell,
Till over me the temple bell
Sounds requiem at life's eventide!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

VIII

BY THE KAMO-GAWA

1.

'Tis night, and o'er the homes of men
The moon shines from a cloudless sky,
Like daimio indolent I lie,
And list the lute-like samisen.

Near by, in strangely-figured gown,
A treasure of Kioto's mart,
Ayame-san, with gentle art,
Plays, her dark eyes demurely down.

Child of Japan, sing once again
That ballad old I love so much,
Lift up thy tender voice, and touch,
With fingers deft, the samisen.

Lift up thy voice and let me hear,
In thy monotonous, low strains,
The story of Gompachi's pains,
Komurasaki's loving tear.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

2.

Ayame-san, Ayame-san,
Far from my boyhood's home I lie,
Above me bends the Nippon sky,
I hear the rustle of the fan.

This is the East: no restless brain,
No Saxon hand, must enter in:
Mikado, sultan, mandarin,
Rule here: for ever may they reign.

As, on the land of lotus cast,
Once were the wandering Grecians charmed,
Who, by that magic fruit disarmed,
Hellas forgot, and warlike past;

So, in this land of old Japan,
Encircled by the summer sea,
Am I charmed, with no wish to flee
Thy lotus-realm, Ayame-san.

3.

Canst tell me, O enchantress bright,
What nymphs antipodal are they

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Who now appear, and now display
Their graceful forms before my sight?

In postures fair, like her who danced
Before King Herod's throne, they stand;
Or sisters of a houri band
Such as Mohammed's heart entranced.

What spell, Ayame, do they weave
With lifted foot, and waving hand,
To hold me in this magic land,
To bind me that I cannot leave?

Dance on—dance on—till morn doth break,
Ye daughters of the summer night!
A spell ye weave about my sight,
But from that spell I would not wake.

4.

Ayame-san, look forth again
Upon the swiftly-gliding river:
See'st thou the myriad lamps that quiver?
Hear'st thou the tinkling samisen?

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

High o'er the Kamo's pebbly bed,
See'st thou the bright pavilions set?
To-night, methinks, no troubles fret
Hearts, like our own, to pleasure wed.

Daughter of Nippon, life for thee
Is bounded by Kioto's groves;
And as the moon the ocean moves,
So hath thy spirit mastered me.

Come what come may I rise not up,
But here, a wanderer from the West,
Like daimio indolent will I rest,
Within my hand the saké cup.

END OF CANTO FIRST

INTERLUDE

Away, away! The sea-gull's screech,
Disconsolate, accosts my ear;
And, in their monotone, I hear
The breakers pounding on the beach.

Rise, O my soul, from idle days;
From nights of pleasure sweet now rise;
Calliope, from out the skies,
Upon me her command thus lays:

"Life, son, is short; and though thy years
Not yet have numbered three times ten,
Yet soon the hour approaches when
Death's steps shall echo in thine ears.

"Then rise from pleasure-seeking days,
From nights of idlesse sweet, O rise,
Weave well thy pilgrim melodies,
If thou wouldst win a master's bays!"



CANTO SECOND

I

THE INLAND SEA AND NAGASAKI

1.

Now, over azure waves, I thread
The mazes of that Inland Sea ⁴¹
Where all earth's beauties seem to be
Combined, one to the other wed.

What simple pen, like mine, can paint
A picture of this land-locked way,
The long strait opening in the bay,
The distant islands blue and faint,

The white-sailed boats that past us glide,
Or in secluded harbors lie,
The dimpled sea, the azure sky,
The neatly-terraced mountain-side?

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Surely, in all the world, no scene
With this fair vision can compare,
No zephyrs soothe like this soft air,
No peaks surpass these summits green!

2.

'Tis morn; the channel narrows: we
Approach, at last, the western gate;
And through Simonoseki's strait ⁴²
Pass out into the open sea.

But still, as though she felt the spell
Which beauty ne'er will cease to cast,
And could not make this gaze her last,
Or had not heart to speak farewell,

The good ship skirts the Kiushiu ⁴³ coast;
Now Hizen ⁴⁴ lures her with his charms,
Now glides she through Hirado's ⁴⁵ arms,
Not knowing which she loves the most.

So all day long, before, behind,
To right, to left, my ravished eyes,
Behold the isles of Nippon rise,
Against the Nippon skies outlined.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

3.

The bugle sounds the close of day,
The colors now are lowered for night,
O beautiful the sunset light
Which falls o'er Nagasaki Bay!

O beautiful the sunset light
Falling upon the land-locked sea,
On slopes where grows the camphor-tree,
On many a temple-covered height!

Sitting upon the frigate's deck
I watch the paling glow expire;
Each mountain's peak is touched with fire,
A floating flame each cloudlet's fleck.

I hear the boatman's evening song,
I see the moon to splendor grow,
And memories of the long ago,
Swift-winged, into my presence throng.

4.

Can I forget thy fairy home,
Its paper panes, its matted floor,

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

The lotus pool beside the door,
The garden quaint where thou didst roam?

The vase of Seto old and rare,
The kakemono ⁴⁶ on the wall,
The shrine where thou in prayer wouldst fall,
The spray of cherry-blossoms ⁴⁷ fair?

No more thy hand shall welcome me,
Alone thou standest on the pier,
And through the night thy voice I hear
Cry "sayonara" ⁴⁸ o'er the sea;

While toward yon distant anchored ship,
Whose masts and hull gigantic loom,
My boatman bears me through the gloom,
Timing with song his paddle's dip.

5.

Now in the east, announcing day,
Long lines of red and gold are run;
Now, from the mountain tops, the sun
Rises o'er Nagasaki Bay;

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Now sounds the boatswain's whistle shrili,
And from his hammock springs the tar;
Now from our buoy we steam afar,
And breezes all our canvas fill.

Fair Decima ⁴⁹ astern now lies,
Where once the sons of Holland dwelt,
When Iyemitsu's hand they felt,
Smiting his country's enemies.

Fair Decima astern now lies,
And Pappenberg ⁵⁰ appears ahead—
The background of a story dread,
Where rose the Christian converts' cries.

6.

Farewell, Japan, farewell! We leave
The rocky Gotos ⁵¹ far behind,
Strong blows the monsoon's steady wind,
The restless waters round us heave!

Farewell the bold and beauteous coasts
That from the floor of ocean start,
The landscapes that bewitched my heart,
Such as no other country boasts!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Farewell the cryptomeria grove,
The green bamboo, the camphor-tree,
The valleys deep which sheltered me,
The rugged mountain-heights I love!

Dear land, three years of life have passed
Since first I hailed thy sea-girt shore;
I know not if I loved thee more
At that first meeting, or this last! ⁵²

II

CANTON AND SHANGHAI

1.

Like to the Schuylkill of my home
The river flows through sloping shores,
But Mongol fingers clasp the oars,
And gaudy sampans ⁵³ go and come.

Now, looming through the summer night,
The richly-freighted junk drifts by;
Now, musical with revelry,
Glides the gay flower-boat ⁵⁴ past my sight.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

'Tis old Canton! The moonlight falls
In splendor o'er the rushing river;
Upon the waves I watch it quiver,
It sleeps upon the city walls.

'Tis hoar Cathay! O land antique,
To whom men give the eldest's place,
My heart salutes thy wrinkled face,
Great mother of a race unique!

2.

A Chinese garden. Let me paint
This work of oriental art,
This triumph of the formal heart,
Its winding paths, its grottoes quaint,
Its pond, with islets here and there,
Where gilded summer-houses stand,
Its rustic bridges, land to land
Uniting, its hydrangeas fair,
Its lotus-flowers with leaves outspread,
(O would their beauty I could limn!)
Which on the pool's calm surface swim,
Its gold-fish darting to be fed.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Here, o'er his tea, the mandarin sits,
Here rests the merchant, sleek and round,
Here, sheltered from the world, the sound
Of women's voices oft-times flits.

3.

And let me sing that fragrant leaf,
Or in Japan or China grown,
Which cheers the men of every zone—
Tea let me sing in stanzas brief.

Oft have mine eyes, among the hills,
Seen, with delight, thy shrub of green;
Oft have my drooping spirits been
Strengthened, by thee, against life's ills;

Oft, by the dusty highway worn,
Have I, at evening, sought thy cup;
And oft, as now, awaked to sup
Thy magic draught at early morn.

O sovereign leaf, or in Cathay,
Or on fair Nippon's hill-sides grown,
The sons of men, in every zone,
Acknowledge thy imperial sway!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

4.

O Mecca-spot of old Macao,
By feet of pilgrims often sought;
Here once a poet lived and wrought,
Here reign decay and silence now!

Camoens garden! ⁵⁵ Down this path,
Shaded by bamboo, let us stroll;
Or rest upon yon rocky knoll,
Which for its crown a grotto hath.

Here, where the poet once would stand,
See now his bust; the features sad
Of him who wrote the *Lusiad*,
An exile in this eastern land.

Hence, after sixteen checkered years
Of toil, misfortune, travel, war,
He sought, at last, his native shore,
To die in penury and tears.

5.

Northward once more; but, as I go,
Thy strait, Formosa, bids me pause;

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Which, like a giant funnel, draws
Into itself all winds that blow.

The monsoon, hurrying southward, raves;
But climbs our ship the ocean-steeps;
And, like a valiant trooper, leaps
Into the ranks of serried waves.

Behind we leave Amoy, Swatow,
But touch where winds the river Min;
At her bold gates we enter in,
And for a day behold Foochow.

Thence through Chusan's romantic isles
To mighty Yangtse's mouth we run;
Here wait high-water, while the sun
Once more across the ocean smiles.

6.

A liquid plain! A yellow waste
Of waters moving toward the sea!
An aqueous immensity
Advancing with majestic haste!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

This is the Yangtse; fitly named
Son of the ocean by his sons;
For nowhere vaster river runs,
Nor one among mankind more famed.

As on the steamer's deck I stand,
Where rolls the light-ship in the wind,
To right, to left, before, behind,
No sign is visible of land.

But as we, in expectant mood,
Against the eddying current steer,
Long strips of level shore appear,
Rising from out the level flood.

7.

Long strips of level shore appear,
Which grow to green and fertile plains;
Here busy agriculture reigns,
And stands "the model city" ⁵⁶ here.

For such is, O Shanghai, the name
Thy western sons their home have given;
And as I tread thy bund ⁵⁷ at even,
I deem thee worthy of thy fame.

PENRRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Here modern Europe dwells among
The water-courses of Cathay;
Here churches stand, and mansions gay,
And rises many a stately hong; ⁵⁸

Here costly silks, and fragrant teas,
And furs, and fans, and porcelains rare
Are centered in profusion ere
They pass away to distant seas.

8.

Far in antipodal Cathay,
Where Yangtse rolls his yellow flood,
We met and parted—was it good?
We knew each other for a day.

Lightly we met, as strangers meet,
And, smiling, clasped a friendly hand;
Sadly, within that flowery land,
We parted, never more to greet.

Beside the swift Whangpoo we stood,
The moon shone o'er its rushing waters;
She was the fairest of earth's daughters,
A wanderer I, of reckless mood.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Farewell, thou best of friends, farewell!
E'en did we part to meet again,
Parting were underlaid with pain;—
Now parting words fall like a knell.

III

KOREA

1.

In funnel-hats, and gowns of white,
Each one with fan or pipe in hand,
I see the swart Koreans stand,
Viewing us from their native height.

But soon their raft-like boats they drive
Across the wave with lusty arm,
And o'er our decks, like children, swarm,
With eye and hand inquisitive.

A hermit land; last one of all
To open to the world its doors;
Whose harbors are forbidden shores,
Whose headlands are a fortress-wall.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

A race recluse; yet soon, I think,
To learn the lesson Fate has sent;
And Orient to Occident
Knit with another golden link.⁵⁹

2.

Now, as behind us dimmer grow
Quelpaert's⁶⁰ bold outlines to our eyes,
Unnumbered islands round us rise—
Korea's archipelago.

They rise, they stud the silent sea
As stars the dark-blue heaven above,
And through their clusters bright we move,
Like fleecy cloud, all silently.

They rise, they stand above the wave,
Some castles old we can but deem,
While others domes of mountains seem,
Whose groins have ocean for a grave.

Here wheel the wild sea-gulls; here play
The seals in many a coral grove;
Here float, upon the waves above,
The fisher-boats of far Cathay.

PENRRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

3.

The Land of Morning Calm! Well might
Kishi ⁶¹ so name this region fair;
Save on the north sea-bounded; there
Rises Paik-tu, ⁶² the ever-white.

Here mountains gaze, serenely grand,
Upon the deep which round them gleams;
Here, by the valleys' tranquil streams,
In rows, the snowy herons stand;

Here, in his looking-chamber ⁶³ high,
Oft sits the sage or poet grave,
Viewing some scene of wood and wave,
With wild-geese flying in the sky.

One trophy only I brought forth,
Cho-sen, ⁶⁴ thy barriers from within—
A royal tiger's splendid skin,
Shot in the forests of the north. ⁶⁵

4.

Behind us, China's shore to seek
Once more, we leave the Korean strand,

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

And o'er the Yellow Ocean stand
For Shantung's promontory bleak.

Its light we hail at break of day,
Shining the stars of morning through,
And in thy harbor deep, Chefoo,
Anchor, and for a sennight stay.

Then over Pechili's wild bay
Our vessel steams, with many a roll;
Tientsin our present journey's goal,
To world-renowned Peking the way.

Here flows the Peiho's tortuous flood,
Here stretches Chihli's wind-swept plain,
Here seems monotony to reign,
And meets the eye nor hill nor wood.⁶⁶

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

IV

IN THE TROPICS

1.

Once more, as on a mustang free,
I ride upon the dark blue wave;
Once more I hear the monsoon rave,
As stand we down the China Sea.

To right, to left, before, behind,
No land is seen, no sail in sight;
By day the sun, the moon by night,
Our comrades are, and the swift wind.

Blow—blow—thou busy gale, whose wings
In the far north began their flight;
Thou bearest me on to sun-lands bright,
To those rich isles Camoens sings,

To strange Siam, to Borneo's beach,
To that fair channel at whose door,
Embowered in palms, sits Singapore,
On—on—till India's strand we reach!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

2.

Now, as we approach the invisible line
Which from that other hemisphere
Divides our own, each night more clear,
The Southern Cross begins to shine.

O constellation beautiful!
Symbol thou, in celestial air,
Of burden that each life must bear,
With poignant pain, or sorrow dull.

O constellation beautiful!
I see thee shining golden-fair,
And golden grows the cross I bear,
With poignant pain, or sorrow dull.

For, like an angel looking down
Upon this ocean where we toss,
Thou teachest that without the cross
Comes never the triumphal crown.

3.

Penang, how does this tropic scene,
Through which my lingering feet now stray,

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Remind me of my boyhood's day,
And hours fantastic which have been.

When, tranced by travelers' tales, I sat,
And saw a mountain-side like this,
With equatorial trees which kiss
Above a waterfall like that.⁶⁷

Here reigns, O bright Malayan land,
Summer throughout the circling year;
Here comes nor ice, nor snowstorm; here
The palms in beauty ever stand;

Here swings the monkey from the tree;
Here in the wood the peacock stalks;
Here garrulously the parrot talks;
Here builds the swallow by the sea!

4.

Home of the shaggy cocoa-nut,
The durion and the mangosteen,
How fair thy flora spreads—bright-green,
And dotted with the mountain hut!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Now in thy forests deep I stand,
Where grows the gutta-percha tree,
Whence come sapan and ebony
And eagle-wood for many a land.

Now through plantations broad I ride
Of coffee-bush and sugar-cane,
Till day's bright hours begin to wane,
And night stalks o'er the mountain-side.

Home of that tufted palm-tree tall,
Whose shaggy nut hangs o'er our heads,
How fair thy flora round me spreads—
Bright-green, luxuriant, tropical!

5.

Farewell, Penang! The vessel's head
Points westward o'er the Indian Sea;
The sun beats down right lustily;
The awnings o'er the deck are spread.

In couch-like chairs of light bamboo,
On games or novels bent, we sit:
Or idly watch the sea-bird flit
Above the indigotic blue.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

We rise each morning with the sun,
And in the ocean-water lave,
Dipped freshly from the cooling wave,
As on our course we swiftly run.

We drink the fragrant tea; we sip
The sherbet cold as winter's snow;
While mangosteen and pomolo⁶⁸
Tempt, with their juice, the grateful lip.

6.

Nor gale, nor calm, our ship alarms,
We share her strength and naught we fear,
Ever her mighty pulse we hear,
Beating through iron-muscled arms.

We watch the sturdy captain stand,
Sextant to eye, and sight the sun;
Or crimson-turbaned Lascars run
Aloft, with nimble foot and hand.

And when descends the balmy night,
And o'er the deck the moonlight falls,
Music some tender past recalls,
Or fills the future with delight.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Come tropic calm, or breezes free,
Come waters smooth, or waves which heave,
Like arrow in its flight we cleave
The circle of the dark-blue sea.⁶⁹

V

ARABIA

1.

Long lines of camels everywhere,
Winding across the desert sand,
Marching across Mohammed's land,
Laden with burdens rich and fair.

Aden, how fiery thy sun's ray
As, standing on this arid rock,
Where broke, of old, the battle's shock,
I gaze upon the glassy bay;

Or, through the city's streets below,
Where silent stalks the bearded sheik,
And turbaned merchants buyers seek,
Aimlessly wander to and fro.

PENRRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Long lines of camels everywhere,
Winding across the desert sand,
Marching across Mohammed's land,
Laden with burdens rich and fair.

2.

Standing on Mocha's famous ground,
O coffee, let me sing thy praise,
For oft hast thou the poet's lays
Inspired, and dull depression drowned.

What cup like thee, at break of day,
To touch the spirit's lethargy?
To quicken with life the drowsy eye?
And nerve the hand for toil or fray?

Or when, at evening's hour, we dine,
And rare Tobacco lends his joy,
What brings such rest without alloy,
O magic berry, drink divine?

Fabled nepenthe thou art not;
Nor dreams, nor wild-eyed ecstasy,
Nor deep oblivion dwell with thee!
Comfort thou bringst to mortal lot!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

VI

EGYPT

1.

Egypt, upon thine ancient shore,
To-day, a pilgrim late, I stand;
Across my foot-prints drifts the sand;
The silent desert lies before.

I turn my back upon the sea,
That sea by Moses crossed of old,
And, through the land of the Pharaohs rolled,
I halt where Memphis used to be.

O memorable hour when first,
Gazing from Cairo's citadel,
The shapes which fancy knew so well
Upon my outward vision burst!

Nile, pyramids, and sphinx I saw,
Transfigured by a sunset rare;
Almost I breathed that Egypt's air
Where Ramses' royal word was law!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

2.

Land of the ibis, from the hour
Of boyhood have I dreamed of thee;
And now, with waking eyes, I see
The evidences of thy power!

I tread where mighty Memphis stood—
Lo, those tomb-temples of the past
Whose shapes, pyramidal and vast,
Have weathered Time's relentless flood!

I tread where mighty Memphis stood—
Lo, on the arid desert's brinks,
Inscrutable, sits the Great Sphinx,
Like necromancer in his hood!

And where that city met the eye,
Named for the sun's resplendent disk,⁷⁰
Still points the lofty obelisk,
With silent finger, toward the sky!

3.

Imperial Egypt that hast been,
Thou risest from the buried past,

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

And livest before me as thou wast,
In peaceful or in warlike scene.

I see, upon the banks of Nile,
Thy kings to great Osiris pray,
Or, like the graven Ramses, slay
The lion and the crocodile.

I see thy sacerdotal trains
Long avenues of sphinxes pace,
While throngs surround each temple-place,
Incense amid, and music's strains.

I see, in helmet and cuirass,
With shield on arm, and spear in hand,
Thy troops, in battle, charge or stand,
Or, conquerors proud, before me pass.

4.

Thou pile of Cheops, up whose side,
Despoiled by many a vandal hand,
I climb, or on whose top I stand,
And gaze upon the desert wide;

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Or through whose corridors to deep
Chambers, where dwells perpetual night,
Save when the turbaned Bedouin's light
Illumes them for a time, I creep;

What art thou, astronomic sign,
Or kingly tomb, or store-house vast,
Or monument, in Egypt's past,
Of metric system held divine? ⁷¹

We know not; we who, in this day,
Or wise savant, or traveler tanned,
View from thy peak the Libyan land,
Or round thy giant bases stray.

5.

We know not; but methinks thou art,
For so the elder poets sing,
The mausoleum of a king;
Here lay proud Cheops' mortal part.

I see, in dreams, the work begun,
Completed is the builder's plan,
Granite is brought from far Asswan,
The structure grows from sun to sun;

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

I see the dusky toilers swarm
Like ants upon the desert sand,
Huge stones defy the workman's hand,
The derrick lends its mighty arm.

High o'er that chamber under-ground
Rose, year by year, the royal tomb;
And centuries after, in this room,
Mamoun a painted mummy found.

6.

And thou, whose mutilated face
Still gazes toward the sacred Nile,
Gray sphinx, beneath what Pharaoh's smile
Was brought forth thy colossal grace?

Speak: who approved thy dual form,
Man-headed, with the lion's frame,
And sought to build, for Egypt's fame,
A shape outliving time and storm?

Who carved thee from the solid rock,
And placed the temple at thy feet,
Here where the sand and valley meet,
On this plateau of limestone block?

PENRRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

No answer: "Cephron" ventures one
Sagacious, skilled in Egypt's lore;
"Nay," cries another, "long before
Cephron this monument was done!"

7.

Where now I stand Cambyzes stood,
And marveled at this image hoar,
And Alexander, fresh from war,
Viewed from this spot the Nile's calm flood.

Here, with sweet Egypt by his side,
Came Cæsar, master of the world,
And bent his head divine, where curled,
At Rome, the wreath of laurel wide.

Here came Mamoun, with Arab band,
And pierced the sacred pyramid
Wherein great Cheops' bones were hid,
But found no treasure for his hand.

And here that dark-haired youth of France,
Napoleon, whose immortal name
Stands next to his of Rome in fame,
Repelled the Mamaluke's fiery lance.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

VII

HOMEWARD BOUND

I.

Egypt, farewell! Thy desert's sand,
The emerald valley of thy Nile,
Thy Nile's self, gemmed with many an isle,
We leave. I lift a parting hand.

I stretch a hand across the wave
To thee; perchance no more we'll meet;
Perchance no more these wandering feet
Shall tread thy shore this side the grave.

Farewell! I seek my native land!
Emerging from the mystic East,
After long years, once more I'd feast
My homesick eyes on Schuylkill's strand!

Behind us fades Port Said away,
The Mediterranean blue we ride,
Europe upon our starboard side,
Upon our port hoar Africa.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

2.

Old ocean, once again I feel
Thy waters blue beneath me heave;
And with the fading shore I leave
The Past behind: its book I seal:

Its book I close and seal with tears,
Then toward the future turn my face;
A prayer within my soul for grace
Strongly to walk in coming years.

O Thou who, over sea and land,
Through many a danger, hast brought me,
I lift in thanks my voice to Thee,
I mark in all Thy guiding hand!

Fly westward, white-winged ship, and bear
Me safely o'er the billow's comb!
Sail onward, ship of life, toward home,
Through straining gales, or weather fair!

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

VIII

BY THE WISSAHICKON

1.

At morn I hear the robin sing
As once he sang in childhood's days;
No sterile seas now meet my gaze,
But budding earth in early spring.

At night I see, in golden car,
Fair Venus hastening to her rest;
No longer seeks she Neptune's breast,
Yon forest 'tis which lures the star.

Home once again! With stick in hand
I tread the path across the fields—
The long brown path. What travel yields
Delight like this? To walk—to stand

In old familiar spots; to feel
This grass beneath my feet; to breathe
This air again! Back, waves which seethe;
I'll off no more on roving keel!

PENRRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

2.

Over me bends my native sky,
Like mother o'er her long-lost child;
Round me, in place of billows wild,
The fragrant clover-meadows lie.

How pleasant, after restless years
Of travel, danger, sickness, strife,
Once more to taste this peaceful life,
Where earth her kindest aspect wears.

The medley of the birds at dawn,
The crowing of the barn-yard cocks,
The voices of the herds and flocks,
The doves' soft cooing on the lawn,

The thousand rural sounds which form
The song of nature in our clime,
Allure me like a siren's rhyme
After the battle or the storm.

3.

Before me runs the foot-path brown,
The dark-green hemlocks o'er me bend,

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

As through the woods my way I wend,
Far from the clamor of the town.

How sweet to wander thus at will
The labyrinth of the forest wild!
What hoary rocks are round me piled!
The aromatic air how still!

The squirrel runs from tree to tree,
Along the intertwining limbs,
The thrush pours forth his vesper hymns,
And sunset through the woods I see.

Sunset on Wissahickon's hills!
Let me the beauteous sight behold!
Each leafy height is bathed in gold,
Gold vapor all the valley fills!

4.

Descend to where the smooth road winds
Beside the ever-winding stream;
Methinks the landscape-painter's dream
Here, surely, its fulfilment finds!

PENRRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

Here sylvan shadows sleep or flit,
Here bends a sky of blue divine,
Here waters, hills, and woods combine
To form a picture exquisite.

And as in this romantic spot
I halt, and for a moment rest,
Gazing upon the golden West,
I think of days which now are not.

My boyhood's haunt! To yon clear stream
How often, in summer, have I come,
And in those cooling waters swum
Where now the lights of sunset gleam!

END OF CANTO SECOND

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

FINALE

O book, distilled from joy and tears,
From passion, sorrow, error, strife,
The epic of my earlier life,
The record of my wandering years.

Thou whom my youthful hands began,
And manhood's touch now lingers o'er,
Fashioned on Egypt's ruined shore,
And 'midst the valleys of Japan.

Canst thou a station find and hold
Among the songs which charm the world?
Or wilt thou be unkindly hurled
Back to this vine-clad cottage old

Where now I sit, in doubtful mood
Whether or not to give thee flight?
O world, whate'er thy voice—'tis right!
O book, whate'er thy fate—'tis good!

NOTES

1. Kadzusa. A province of Japan.
2. Mount Fuji. The highest mountain in Japan.
3. On the night of January 23, 1870, while standing out of Yedo Bay, homeward bound, the U. S. ship *Oneida* was run into and sunk by the P. & O. steamer *Bombay*.
4. Uraga. The village opposite which Commodore Perry first anchored, July 8, 1853, bearing a letter from President Fillmore to the Shogun of Japan. These lines were written in 1880.
5. Samurai. Under the old *régime* a man belonging to the military class, entitled to bear arms.
6. Daimio. One of the great nobles, under the old feudal system, among whom the land of Japan was divided.
7. Iyeyasu. The first Shogun of the Tokugawa line, and generally regarded as the greatest character ever produced by Japan. He was the founder of Yedo.
8. Iyemitsu. Grandson of Iyeyasu. By him, in 1624, was issued the edict expelling foreigners from Japan.
9. Will Adams. An Englishman, chief pilot of a fleet of Dutch ships which sailed, in the year 1598, from Holland for Japan. He entered the service of the Shogun, married a Japanese woman, was made lord of the village of Hemi, and never afterward left Japan. He died May 6, 1620. His grave and that of his wife are situated on the top of a beautiful hill overlooking the Bay of Yedo.
10. Kuruma. Literally a "wheel" or "vehicle." In this case applied to the jinrikisha, a small two-wheeled carriage, drawn by a man.
11. Sumida. A river which flows through Tokio.
12. The temples of the Shinto faith, built of unpainted wood, and adorned with neither image nor picture, are often simple to the point of plainness.
13. Fuji-mi taira. Literally, "Terrace for looking at Fuji."
14. Zojoji. A celebrated Buddhist temple, destroyed by fire on the morning of January 1, 1874. In what were once the temple grounds,

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

but which now form the Public Gardens of Shiba, are those marvels of Japanese art, the tombs of the Shoguns.

15. Geisha. A professional woman, with the accomplishments of playing, singing and dancing.

16. Musume. A young girl.

17. Saké. A liquor brewed from rice.

18. Asakusa. The most popular temple in Tokio, whose extensive grounds daily present the appearance of a vast fair. It is one of the sights of the metropolis, and is usually among the first places visited by foreigners.

19. Ueno. One of the Public Gardens of Tokio, formerly the grounds of a great Buddhist temple. The main building was destroyed by fire in 1868, during the progress of a battle between the Imperialists and the followers of the Shogun; but the magnificent park still remains. Here, on fine afternoons in April, all Tokio assembles to view the beautiful cherry-flowers, which are then at their best.

20. Gompachi and Komurasaki. Famous lovers of Japan, whose grave is at the village of Meguro, near Tokio. Their story has been well told by Mr. Mitford in his "Tales of Old Japan."

21. Tokaido. Road of the Eastern Sea. One of the two great roads between Tokio and Kioto, so-called in contradistinction to the Nakasendo, or Road of the Central Mountains.

22. Nihon-Bashi. The Bridge of Japan, in the center of Tokio, from which distances in every direction are measured.

23. Norimono. A kind of sedan-chair.

24. Kugé. A noble of the Mikado's court under the old *régime*.

25. Sengakuji. Spring Hill Temple, whose cemetery contains the graves of the Forty-Seven Ronins. The events which culminated in the death of these men have been made the theme of countless romances, poems and dramas; and when the writer visited the tombs, he found there pilgrims from all parts of Japan.

26. At the village of Hase, near Kamakura, is a colossal image of Buddha, celebrated for its remarkable beauty. It was formerly protected by a temple, but to-day rests in the open air, surrounded by a grove of bamboo and oak.

27. Lake Biwa, according to tradition, was produced by an earthquake in the year 286 B. C.; and the same night Mount Fuji rose from the plains of Suruga.

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

28. Kamo-gawa. A river which flows through the middle of Kioto, spanned by a number of bridges.

29. Atago-yama and Hiyei-zan. Two conspicuous peaks in the range of mountains which surrounds Kioto.

30. Ginkakuji. A temple which takes its name from the Ginkaku, or "Silver Pavilion," which stands in the gardens. It was, at one time, the residence of the Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa; and is mainly noticeable as being the place where, about 400 years ago, Yoshimasa, his retainer So-Ami, and the monk Shuko, invented and first practiced the mysterious rites of tea-drinking.

31. Uji. A district near Kioto, celebrated for producing the best tea in Japan.

32. Kinkakuji. A monastery so-called from the Kinkaku, or "Golden Pavilion," which stands in the garden. The grounds were the site of the palace (now gone) built by the ex-Shogun Yoshimitsu when, in 1397, he abdicated his office, assumed the garb of a Buddhist monk, and retired from the world.

33. Gion. A well-known Shinto temple.

34. The view of Kioto from the height on which stands the great Buddhist temple of Kiyomidzu is one of extraordinary beauty.

35. On summer nights the wide pebbly bed of the Kamogawa—which, except when swollen by heavy rains, is a mere rivulet—is covered with innumerable little platforms or booths, each one occupied by its party of pleasure-seekers.

36. Arashiyama. A favorite resort in April, when the side of the mountain is covered with beautiful cherry-flowers.

37. Lake Biwa, also called the Lake of Omi, is a beautiful and celebrated lake near Kioto. "Its area," I quote from the excellent handbook of Satow and Hawes, "is about equal to that of the Lake of Geneva. Much mention is made by the Japanese of the Omi no Hakkei, or eight beauties of Omi. These are the Autumn Moon from Ishiyama, the Evening Snow on Hirayama, the Blaze of Evening at Seta, the Evening Bell of Miidera, the Boats Sailing back from Yabase, a Bright Sky with a Breeze at Awadzu, Rain by Night at Karasaki, and the Wild Geese Alighting at Katada. It is evident that in order to enjoy these beauties the places named must be visited at the proper hours and seasons."

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

38. Shugakuin. A noted garden laid out by the Mikado Go-Midzuno in the seventeenth century.

39. Samisen. A guitar with three strings.

40. It was while sitting upon the mountain where stands the temple of Kiyomidzu that Hideyoshi, better known as the Taiko, conceived his project for the invasion of China.

41. The charms of the Inland Sea have been dwelt upon by every traveler; and I doubt if there is, on the surface of the globe, a more beautiful combination of ocean and mountains.

42. Simonoseki Strait. The western entrance to the Inland Sea, uniting its waters with those of the Strait of Korea.

43. Kiushiu. The southernmost of the four principal islands which compose the Empire of Japan.

44. Hizen. A province of Kiushiu.

45. Hirado. A small island off the coast of Hizen.

46. Kakemono. A hanging picture.

47. The Japanese, as a rule, do not combine flowers in bouquets for decoration; but place in the room a single plant—a lotus, for instance, or a chrysanthemum, or a spray of cherry-blossoms.

48. Sayonara. Farewell.

49. Decima. An islet in the Bay of Nagasaki upon which (at the time of the expulsion of foreigners from Japan in the middle of the seventeenth century) a small colony of Hollanders was suffered to remain. Their intercourse with the outer world was limited to the visit of one ship a year.

50. Pappenberg. A rock near the entrance to the harbor of Nagasaki from which, in the seventeenth century, many thousands of native Christians are said to have been thrown.

51. Goto Islands. A group off the western coast of Kiushiu.

52. I have often tried to account for the peculiar charm which Japan has for most foreigners, both men and women, and which, I confess, it has for me, but have never been able to do so quite to my own satisfaction. Elements of attraction there certainly are in the mental characteristics, the manners and customs, the arts, the literature, and the manufactures, of this Oriental people; but not the least charm lies, perhaps, in the scenery, which seems to possess, in itself, the quality of a singular attractiveness. A landscape externally beautiful, animated by an indescribable spirit of friendliness, welcomes the traveler

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

to this sea-girt isle. Who, that has once seen, but remembers with a feeling akin to affection, the valley of Kioto, the Bay of Nagasaki, the mountains of Nikko; Lake Biwa, the Inland Sea, or Fuji-San. But whether the charm lies in the land or the people, or, as seems probable, in both combined, certain it is that when I first set foot upon this unique isle I felt the same indescribable fascination which now, after an acquaintance of many years, still holds me in its tenacious but delightful toils.

53. Sampan. A small Chinese boat.

54. Flower-boat. A pleasure boat.

55. At Macao, near Hongkong, the traveler is still shown the garden of the great Portuguese poet, Camoens, who passed sixteen years of his life in the Far-East. On a rocky knoll overlooking the water is a bronze bust of the poet, with, underneath, a quotation of three stanzas from the *Lusiad*.

56. European Shanghai is a prosperous and beautiful city, and is popularly known on the China coast as "The Model Settlement."

57. Bund. The street facing the water.

58. Hong. A place of business.

59. At the time these lines were written Korea was still unopened.

60. Quelpaert. A large island south of, and belonging to Korea.

61. Kishi. The founder of Korea.

62. Paik-tu. White-head. A mountain in the north of Korea.

63. In Japan, and also in Korea, a room called the "looking-chamber" is often set apart for the contemplation of some beautiful scene.

64. Cho-sen. The native name of Korea. Literally "Morning Calm."

65. The tiger found in Mongolia and the northern provinces of Korea is a magnificent animal; larger, if anything, than that of India.

66. The great plains of northern China, upon which stand Tientsin and Peking, are, especially in winter, the embodiment of loneliness and monotony.

67. I find the following entry in my diary: "Arrived in Penang early this morning. Went ashore after breakfast with Count B——, and drove through groves of cocoa-nut palm and coffee plantations to 'The Waterfall,' on the side of the mountain. The scenery, with its luxuriant and truly equatorial vegetation, recalled to my mind the descriptions I had read in books of travel early in life; and with such

PENRHYN'S PILGRIMAGE

vividness that I almost felt as if I were revisiting, after many years, a spot familiar to me in my boyhood."

68. Mangosteen and pomolo. Two delicious fruits of the East.

69. Life on board the great passenger steamers which ply between Europe and the Far-East is certainly as near "sweet-doing-nothing" as one often comes in this world.

70. Heliopolis.

71. The theory of Professor Piazzzi Smythe is, I believe, that the Great Pyramid is a memorial of a system of weights and measures revealed by special inspiration, and intended to be universal.

SEA-GRASSES



DEDICATION

To you, my shipmates and my brothers, who
Have sailed with me the dark blue ocean's flood,
Round the great world, Ulysses-like, careering,
Or in the enchanted East, or West robust,
Skirting the poles, or that voluptuous coast
Where dark-eyed señoritas ever smile
Beside Pacific's wave, to you, brave men,
Knightly defenders of our country's flag,
I dedicate (perchance for idler hours,
Since poesy doth oft beguile the soul)
These songs—this log-book of a long-past cruise.



PRELUDE

I

E'en as a voyager
Gathers sea-grasses,
And in his album—
Sorting, arranging—
Places them, giving
Each spray its corner;

2.

So ye song-florets,
Born of the ocean,
You have I gathered,
And on the pages
White of this booklet
Placed you in order.



I

A VISIT FROM NEPTUNE

(CROSSING THE LINE)

“We crossed the Line about nine o’clock in the evening, and received the usual visit from Neptune. His Majesty was impersonated by the Boatswain’s Mate, and his assumed arrival on board was reported to the Captain with due formality. The next morning, about ten o’clock, he appeared again, accompanied by Amphitrite, his wife, and a numerous suite (all impersonated by members of the crew); and the usual rites for the initiation of land-lubbers took place amidst much sky-larking.” (These last, however, are not described here.) Extract from my Log Book.

1.

It was the good ship Iroquois,
She sailed the southern sea.
O jolly tars, and apprentice boys,
And officers gay were we!

SEA-GRASSES

2.

Southward we sailed till overhead
The Southern Cross shone bright,
While far behind, as on we fled,
The North Star sank from sight.

3.

Southward we sailed till we reached the Line,
'Twas the first watch of the night,
And song and pipe and golden wine
Our wandering hours made bright.

4.

Then suddenly—was it from out the sea?—
Sounded a merry horn,
And “Ship ahoy!”—as listened we—
Unto our ears was borne,

5.

And up the ladder, out of the deep,
With trident glittering bright,
And beard that on the deck did sweep,
Old Neptune hove in sight.

SEA-GRASSES

6.

“What ship is this?” “The Iroquois”

Our Captain speaks him straight.

“Where from? Where bound?” With beard he
toys

And bends his royal pate.

7.

Each answer in a volume old,

With information stored,

He writes. Then quoth he, “Captain bold

Have you any lubbers on board?”

8.

The Captain spake, “A few there are,

I think, your Majesty.”

Grimly then smiled each jolly tar,

Trembled each lubber’s knee.

9.

“Ho! Ho!” the king of ocean cried,

Twinkled his eyes so blue,

“Gramercy! But I fancied I’d

Find something here to do.

SEA-GRASSES

10.

“With your permission, Captain brave,
To-morrow morn at ten
The customary rites we’ll have,
And lubbers change to men.”

11.

He grasped his glittering trident tight,
The monarch of the deep,
He turned and disappeared from sight
Adown the ladder steep.

12.

Our Captain poured the sparkling cheer,
He was a sailor bold,
We drank to wives and sweethearts dear
As o’er the deep we rolled.

SEA-GRASSES

II

SEA VOICES

1.

Dear mother earth, farewell!
From this sequestered spot,
From this Andean dell,
I go—the wanderer's lot.
For through the ether fall
Voices my ear can tell;
The dark blue waters call;
Dear mother earth, farewell!

2.

Dear mother earth, farewell!
The nymphs of ocean call,
A message they would tell,
Their arms about me fall.
I go—the wanderer's lot,
From this Andean dell,
From this sequestered spot.
Dear mother earth, farewell!

Tacna, Chile,
April, 1887.

SEA-GRASSES

III

BOSQUE DE VIENA

1.

Northward our gallant vessel steams
Across the dark-blue ocean;
Its mighty waters lie in dreams—
We scarcely feel a motion.

Our bandsmen gay, at set of sun,
On deck appear; and then—ah—
That waltz of all the sweetest one—
The “Bosque de Viena.”

Dear strain! Oft have I danced to thee
With dark-eyed señorita,
But now thou ever bring'st to me
The memory of Anita!

2.

Where stretches Andes giant chain
Beside the blue Pacific
She dwelt; would I could live again
Those hours so beatific,

SEA-GRASSES

That night we danced till rose the sun

'Midst crimson and sienna,

That waltz of all the sweetest one—

The "Bosque de Viena,"

When, as we heard the music start,

She said, "We soon must sever;

'Tis our last dance before we part;

Our last—perhaps forever!"

3.

Dear girl, across the ocean's brine

Once more I roam, but never

Shall I forget those words of thine—

"Our last—perhaps forever"?

That morn when rose the Andes sun

'Midst crimson and sienna,

That waltz of all the sweetest one—

The "Bosque de Viena."

Ah no, though many years or few

Shall part us, Señorita,

Those dulcet strains are sacred to

Thy memory, Anita!

U. S. S. Iroquois,

At Sea, April, 1887.

SEA-GRASSES

IV

RECUERDO DE LIMA

1.

The sun descends, the day grows late,
Dark clouds the welkin fleck;
The whistle of the boatswain's mate
Sounds on the windy deck.

As leaps the vicuña o'er the plain
We leap across the sea;
And Lima, from this stormy main,
My heart returns to thee.

Far off the music of the dance,
Where joy the night-hour chases;
Far off (what eyes like theirs can glance?)
The sweet Limenean faces;

But as our vessel northward booms
Beneath the stormy sky,
Cristobal's mount before me looms,
The Rimac wanders by.

SEA-GRASSES

2.

Querida mia, once again
I hear thy tender voice;
Of all the maids in Lima then,
Thou ever wast my choice.

Once more thy gentle form I take,
And through the waltz we float—
The music is a fairy lake,
O'er which doth glide our boat.

On—on—thy pulse is timed with mine,
Our spirits are as one;
On—on—till morning sun doth shine,
And joyous night is done!

Querida mia, distant now
The hands which here address thee;
But to thy beauty still I bow,
And still I pray—God bless thee!

U. S. S. Iroquois,
At Sea, November, 1887.

SEA-GRASSES

V

TO ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON

(Written in 1887.)

Yet a few years and thou, immortal bard,
Who from thy island home singst to the world,
Great Englishman, thou wilt have passed away
To other life, to other world, and we
Be left without the music of thy voice.
Since Milton have we ne'er beheld thy peer.
Yet more like art thou to that son of Rome,
Divine Virgilius, whom since boyhood's day
Loved have I as the king of epic song.
Farewell, great Alfred! Though thy mortal face
I ne'er have seen, yet have I heard thy voice,
Immortal, singing in this world of Time!

VI

IN CALIFORNIA

Can pen of mine describe thee, beauteous land,
Resting in peace, like Avalon of old,
Or happy Isles of the Hesperides,
Clasped in the arms of the caressing sea?

SEA-GRASSES

Here roses blow incomparably sweet!
Here sing the birds! And comes a round of days
So beautiful they seem of Heaven a part—
Days dropped from Heaven into the lap of earth!

Here, after months of shipboard—voyages long,
Gales, tropic calms, and pestilential bays,
And wintry circles of Antarctic sea,
His lot who lives upon the deep—I came.

And here, in this terrestrial paradise,
Where enters not harsh cold, nor torrid heat,
Tempered forever by Pacific's wave,
Now would I rest, and give my days to Peace!

Mare Island, California,

April, 1888.

VII

TO MISTRESS FLORENCE

(ON HER SIXTEENTH BIRTHDAY.)

AN ACROSTIC.

Fair Mistress Florence, would that I,
Like the troubadours of Italy,

SEA-GRASSES

Or sunny southern France, could sing:
Rhymes many to thy feet I'd bring.
E'en while they wore the sword they wrote,
Nor in red war less strongly smote
Casques—greaves—because, throughout the fray,
Each bore his mistress' favor gay.

Were I like them my pen should write,
On this, thy natal day so bright,
Ode suited to the fair event,
Dancing with youth and merriment.
Such should to sweet sixteen be sent.

Mare Island, California,

August 17, 1888.

VIII

A PORTRAIT

Thou dream of beauty, round whose classic brow
The golden locks of Aphrodite twine,
Knotted behind, would I could paint thee thus,
Sitting serene, gowned in celestial blue!

SEA-GRASSES

A nymph of Greece; yet redolent of the soil
Of this, thy native land; autochthonous;
Splendidly fair as Napa's fruitful vale,
Or Shasta's peak, or famed Yosemite.

IX

RECOLLECTIONS OF MARE ISLAND, CALIFORNIA

To L. R. Q.

Fair lady, no one have I ever known
Nearer my ideal lady than art thou—
Well-born, high-bred, sweet woman and true wife.
Deign to accept, therefore, these words of praise—
Not flattery but the simple truth—likewise,
As token slight, this verse which seeks to sing
The mimic court of which thou wast the queen.
Deign to accept this praise, these rhymes from one
Who, wandering o'er the ocean's vast expanse,
Remembers oft thy gracious womanhood.

1.

Over the great Pacific's breast,
The helmsman steering south-south-west,

SEA-GRASSES

Bound for those bright Samoan Isles,
Where fervid summer ever smiles,
Now driven by the cruel gale,
Now borne by gentler winds, we sail.

2.

But I, like school-boy disinclined
To duty, ever look behind;
Or like old Adam, just bereft
Of Eden, mourn the joys I've left.

3.

O happy isle! Far out at sea,
Oft, in my dreams, I visit thee!
I see the California hills,
The breath of morn my spirit fills,
While, round about my sun-lit room,
Behold! a million roses bloom.
Once more I drink, O tonic rare!
The magic California air;
I bask in sunshine—sunshine known
To this auriferous land alone;
And, like to those of Arcady,
The happy days and months glide by.

SEA-GRASSES

4.

Is nature all? Ah no, kind friends,
She but a charm to friendship lends;
She but reflects, methinks, the gold
Of friendship in her sky and wold.
Ye comrades of the jovial heart,
From you, indeed, 'twas hard to part!
Ye dames and damsels fair, to you
Could heart of man be aught but true?
O would that, in idyllic verse,
Fitly I could our joys rehearse!
The picnic blithe, the dinner fair
With flowers and plate and porcelain rare,
The game of whist when nights were long,—
The supper and the jocund song,
The moonlight walk, the rapturous dance,
The golden wine of sunny France,
The gay cotillon's rhythmic flight,
Its men and maids with favors dight,
Its figures—each a new delight,
Its infinite variety.
Prime favorite of Terpsichore!
Queen in the rose-garden of dances,
Whose beauty every heart entrances!

SEA-GRASSES

The masquerade, the witty play,
The sparkling operetta gay,
Perchance some wild Vallejo night,
With straw-ride by the full-moon's light.
Some merry little German court
We seemed, in far Pacific port!

5.

O happy time! O golden year!
Fate brings me few like thee, I fear.
My heart no words but these can pen—
Would I could live thee o'er again!

6.

Farewell—farewell! The Past is done!
I wake beneath the tropics' sun.
I see the lonely sea-bird wheel,
Once more the ship's long roll I feel,
As, borne upon the wings benign
Of the North-East Trades, we near the Line.

U. S. S. Monongahela,
At Sea, February, 1889.

SEA-GRASSES

X

BECALMED

1.

On the equator
Pauses the good ship
In her flight southward.
Useless her broad sails.
Gone is the north-wind,
Gone is the south-wind,
Gone is the east-wind,
Gone is the west-wind.
Down from the zenith
Pour the sun's arrows.
Glassy the surface
Of the vast ocean.
Only the long swell
Of the Pacific
Rolls her to starboard,
Rolls her to larboard,—
Rest she finds never.
Even as a traveler
Lost in the desert

SEA-GRASSES

Scans the horizon,
Watching for succor—
So doth the good ship
Watch for the breezes,
Waiting impatient,
Longing for succor.

2.

Rises before me
Then a blest vision—
Earth, the All-Mother—
And, like Antæus,
I long for her presence.
Homesick her child rocks
Out on the salt seas.
Earth loves the earth-born.
O to lie happy,
Supine on the green grass,
Under the maples,
Dreaming and listening
To the birds singing,
As in my boyhood!
O to feel once more
Mother Earth near me!

SEA-GRASSES

That she might fold me
Fast in her green arms!
That I might rest there,
Clasped in her bosom!

3.

Visions celestial,
Sounds beatific,
Sights of the green earth,
Chords of her music,
Meadows and bird-songs,
Mountains and forests,
Gurgling of brooklets,
Scents of the woodland,
Vales Paradisiac,
Lowing of cattle,
Farewell—ah farewell!

4.

Once more behold I,
Calm-bound, the good ship;
Hear her great main-sail
Uselessly flapping;
As on the long swell

SEA-GRASSES

Of the Pacific
Rolls she to starboard,
Rolls she to larboard,
Rest finding never.

U. S. S. Monongahela,
At Sea, March, 1889.

XI

PAGO-PAGO

ISLAND OF TUTUILA, SAMOA.

1.

The pea-green wave where bright-blue fishes swim,
And o'er whose surface glides the rude canoe
Of Tutuilian voyager to and fro;
The line of tufted palm-trees on the beach,
Bearing, each one, its milky cocoa-nuts;
The densely-wooded mountain-side behind,
Rising, in leafy masses, to the sky;
This is far Pago-Pago's tropic bay.
A mighty amphitheater, whose ring
Is ocean, and whose sides a mountain-wall.

SEA-GRASSES

I see it now, and hear, as in a dream,
The murmur of the surf upon the sand.

2.

No more the rolling deck, when from the sky
Descends the whirlwind, and the cruel sea
Joins hands with it for havoc; but instead
Firm land and fair; the forest's fragrant breath;
The twittering of the birds at dawn; the sun,
With golden feet upon the mountain-top,
Pouring his light o'er woodlands tropical;
The moon upon the silent palms by night!

3.

How sweet to mariners this green-clad earth
After long weeks upon the salty deep!
How sweet this rest upon the mountain-side,
'Midst trees and flowers and music-making birds,
After the toils and vigils of the sea!
E'en like delights celestial to the heart
Of him who leaves the troubles of the world,
And wakes to find his soul in Paradise!

SEA-GRASSES

4.

Here dwells a sylvan and a kindly race,
Savage yet docile; and methinks 'twould be
A life-task meet for one of us, who hold
The fruits of busy centuries in our hands,
To feed from our full store this primal man,
To rule him with a guiding arm yet strong,
And, with the years, from chaos to construct
The fabric of a fitly-ordered state.

XII

SAMOAN DAYS

1.

Here winds the sweet iao ¹ his liquid horn
At break of day, proclaimer of the sun;
Here stalks the red-brown chief with lofty mien;
Here brood the palms and seem to whisper woe.

2.

Here bronzine maids, save for a cincture, bare,
With round each head, of leaves or flowers, a wreath,

¹ *Iao*. The name of a bird. From *i*, to cry, and *ao*, daybreak, at which time it is generally heard.

SEA-GRASSES

Stride through the tropic wood, or in the deep,
With outspread limbs, lovely amphibians, swim.

3.

Here sounds the siva's ² music; and, with step
Caprine, in sylvan revels unrestrained,
Dance men and maids; so, to the pipe of Pan,
In fabled glades, danced nymphs and satyrs once.

4.

Here rises, through the silent evening air,
The vesper hymn, circling from hut to hut,
By fresh Samoan voices chanted, taught
By pious missionaries of the church of Christ.

XIII

APIA

MARCH 16, 1889.

On the 16th of March, 1889, the reef-bound harbor
of Apia, the principal port of the Samoan Islands,
was visited by one of those terrible hurricanes pe-

² *Siva*. A dance.

SEA-GRASSES

culiar to the tropics. The men-of-war in the harbor at the time were the *Trenton*, *Vandalia* and *Nipsic* (American); the *Olga*, *Adler* and *Eber* (German); and the *Calliope* (British). Of the American ships the *Vandalia* was driven upon the reef and destroyed with great loss of life. The *Trenton*, flag-ship of Rear-Admiral Kimberly, also went upon the reef, but sustained less injury. No lives were lost, and all hands were safely landed the next day, after the gale had subsided. The *Nipsic* was run upon a sandy beach and saved. Of the German ships the *Olga* was beached and saved. The *Adler* was seized by a tremendous wave and thrown high up on the reef—a total loss. The *Eber*—with all hands on board—disappeared under the reef early in the gale. She seems to have turned completely over, and for long afterward could be seen (as one looked down through the clear water) lying upon the bottom of the bay—keel up. The British ship *Calliope*—owing principally to her superior engine-power—was the only ship that escaped scathless. When almost upon the reef, and riding to her last cable, her Captain decided to try to steam out to the open sea against the gale, and fortunately succeeded. This action was not pos-

SEA-GRASSES

sible for the other ships, as neither the American nor the German vessels had the steaming-power necessary to make headway against the tremendous wind and sea.

1.

Ye isles Samoan, fatal sisters three,
Savaii, Tutuila, Upolu,
Weep for the brave who lie beneath your waves!
And Thou, O Muse, who erst sang love, sing now
Courage and duty; heroes undismayed
In battle with the cataclysmal sea,
Each at his post, steady in the face of death!
Awake, Melpomene, and lend thy aid!

2.

Apia's crescent bay, open on the north,
Whose horns Matautu are and Mulinuu,
O'er whose blue wave, by hidden jagged reefs
Of coral rimmed, the sennit-sewed canoes
Of tattooed warriors ride; or gentler craft
Of maids Samoan, singing at the oar,
With sweet reiteration, their wild songs,
Or, veritable mermaids, in the deep

SEA-GRASSES

Swimming, with graceful undulating forms:
Apia's fateful semicircle fair,
Where stand in lines the melancholy palms
Whence hangs the milky cocoa-nut on high,
And bread-fruit, taro and banana grow,
And sings that island bird of liquid note,
And flows the Vaisiaga's ophite stream,
And bright green spreads the landscape right and
left,
With wooded mountains, veiled in blue, behind:
Apia, with its beauty South-Sea Isle,
This the stage-setting is of my elege;
The arena this where gladiators brave
Clutched with the ravening tigers of the sea.

3.

As ye have seen, in winter time, a lake
Half-frozen, round whose shores a fringe of ice
Extends far toward the middle, which as yet
All uncongealed, ripples with surface free,
So at low tide Apia's bay appears,
Fringed by a reef of coral round about.

SEA-GRASSES

4.

I see as in a dream that drama wild,
And hear its tragic voices manifold.
The armada fair; the flags American,
And that of England, those of Germany;
The gallant war-ships basking in the sun;
The voices of the bugles morn and eve;
The ever-glowing guns; the bustling life,
Each ship a little world complete; anon
The ominous signs; the steadily-falling glass—
Augur unerring of the wrath to come;
Nimbiferous winds; the long preluding swell;
The smiling face of heaven by clouds obscured;
The busy preparations of the ships—
Lower yards sent down, the skyey topmasts housed,
Steam up; each gallant argosy secure,
Riding at anchor, waiting for the shock.

5.

A pause—the calm profound before the storm—
The vague expectancy of evil—then,
With distant voices weird presaging woe,
The rising gale; fierce squalls from the outer sea,
With roc-like wings, each fiercer than the last,

SEA-GRASSES

Harrying the bay; the gallant ships at first
Holding their own, to leeward staggering then
Before the blast; black night enshrouding all;
Cloud-strata, like Pandora's casket each,
Arriving, with aerial furies crammed
Innumerable; the wild hour before the dawn;
The *Eber* drifting toward the fatal reef,
Dragging her anchors; her struggle to escape;
Her failure; awful seas encompass her;
As ye have seen a leaf before the winds
Of autumn borne, whirled helpless here and there,
So was the unhappy *Eber* seized; she strikes;
Broadside she strikes and disappears from view;
To that dark sepulcher beneath the reef
The hundred-handed ocean bears her down;
She vanishes, with her three-score lives and ten;
She vanishes, to be seen of men no more.

6.

Night wanes but wanes not that convulsion dire.
Rather, in fiercer phalanxes, the winds,
Like unleashed spirits from the nether world,
With grisly cries, gather to the awful wake.
Huge rollers from the outer ocean rush,

SEA-GRASSES

Wave behind wave, into that trap-like gulf
Where struggling lies, like netted birds, their prey.
Mast-high o'erhead they tower, then downward
plunge,

Deluging the slant decks, and intrepid souls
Sweeping away with stress resistless; souls
To be consigned thence to that maelstrom vast
Which round the fatal harbor, fed by seas
Incoming, and the swoln Vaisiaga, whirled—
A hidden monster lived and worked and whirled,
Bearing its victims ever oceanward,
Far out into the abyss of storm, or down
To nethermost lair in the world submarine,
By horrid arms tentacular enclosed.

7.

Night wanes but wanes not that convulsion dire.
Morn breaking shows a sky without a sun,
A sinister concave with tortuous clouds
Painted: this overhead: below the bay,
Like caldron of some anthropophagite
Gigantic, boils: here, in distressful plight,
Nipsic, Vandalia, Olga and *Adler* ride:
Black from their funnels pours the desperate smoke

SEA-GRASSES

As strive they to escape the impending doom:
The jagged reef—the jaws of Death—confronts
them!

Of the lost *Eber* them the vision haunts!
O thou sea-monster, ruthless in thy wrath,
When wast thou than this day more terrible?
Chaos seemed to have come again to earth!
But cease, O Muse! In accents brief relate
Each vessel's fate, and cease thy story grim,
For horrors twice-told pall! The reef escaped,
Beached were the *Nipsic* and the *Olga* soon,
Safe on a sandy strand; but by a sea
Titanic was the *Adler* thrown, and fell
Flat on her side, far in upon the reef;
Like armored knight, in mediæval joust
Thrown from his horse, she falls, and, helpless, lies;
And the *Vandalia* fair next that same reef
Sank down, as sinks a deer by dogs assailed,
Harried to her death by triturating seas.

8.

All night, to awe-struck watchers on the beach,
(Seen through that swirling hurricane or heard)
The oscillating lights of ships unseen,

SEA-GRASSES

The trumpet-uttered voices of command,
The piercing whistle of the boatswain's mate,
The fierce collisions of the huddled ships.
All day, by watchers turned to workers now,
Passing of life-lines between ship and shore,
Ruddy Samoans singing in the surf,
Waist-deep standing, with outstretched rescuing
 hands,
Or swimming after lives lost but for them,
Island-bred heroes of the wood and wave.

9.

The closing scene: the *Trenton's* fires put out,
Broken her helm; the stout *Calliope*,
Four cables parted of her anchors five,
Slipping her last, hard by that fatal reef,
On iron muscles puissant staking all,
And to the open sea escaping safe;
The *Trenton's* cheer, that cheer heard round the
 world,
As, slowly moving up against the gale,
Out of that harbor of doom fighting her way,
Them the *Calliope* close passes by;
The answer from a hundred English throats;

SEA-GRASSES

The *Trenton's* end, last one of all to yield;
She of that Admiral brave the flagship is
Who in his youth by Farragut's side abode
Through many a battle-cyclone in the south;
She, on that reef remorseless drifting now,
Strikes the submerged *Vandalia*, with her tops
And rigging filled with men; strikes, but to them,
With rocket-carried lines, brings rescue sweet,
Rescue and, on the early morrow, land;
She, with our country's banner at her gaff,
Our anthem sounding at the sunset hour,
Lies in the deepening shadows of the night,
A lion wounded but defiant still!

10.

O isles Samoan, fatal sisters three,
Savaii, Tutuila, Upolu,
Do ye like sirens lure but to destroy?
If so, melt stony-hearted, melt for once,
And weep the brave who lie beneath your waves!
Cease, O Melpomene, thy tragic song!

Apia, Samoa,
July, 1889.

SEA-GRASSES

XIV

BEFORE TAMALPAIS

1.

Over Tamalpais the sun
Sinks, his daily journey done;
And the waters of the bay
Stretch—a topaz sea—away;
As we stand upon the heath,
With the silent world beneath.

2.

Lady, standing, lingering here,
Sweet it is to feel thee near;
From my heart a silent prayer
Rises through the golden air;
Gone the parting and the tear,
Gone the months of exile drear;
Over land and over sea
Hath the Father guided me;
Now once more I see thy face
Shining in its wonted place;
And my wanderer's spirit thrills

SEA-GRASSES

As the California hills—
Purple hills of Paradise—
Round about me once more rise!

3.

Lady, let us think no more
What the future has in store;
In the hands of God it is,
With its sorrow or its bliss;
Let us leave it, then, to Him,
Though it fronts us vague and dim;
Let us, standing on this heath,
With the silent world beneath,
Think, dear friend, but of to-day,
And be happy while we may.

Vallejo, California,
January, 1890.

SEA-GRASSES

XV

A TUS OJOS

1.

Lady, whence come those ebon eyes of thine,
Black as the coal where sleeps the living flame,
Which steadfast gaze upon me through thy smile?

2.

Nothing thou answerest: but methinks it is
The Andalusian blood which shapes those orbs,
By that fair ancestress of thine bequeathed.

3.

Nothing thou answerest: but methinks it is
The Andalusian blood which thus doth flower,
E'en on this distant California shore.

4.

And Carmen's music echoes through my brain—
The Toreador's song—and in my dream we stroll
Together 'mongst the men and maids of Spain.

Vallejo, California,
February, 1890.

SEA-GRASSES

XVI

ADIEU

Remember me when I am far away,
On boreal or on equatorial shore.
Adieu! I'll see San Pablo's sapphire bay,
And Mount Diablo's misty top no more.

Adieu! Adieu! I seek the deep gray sea,
Which like the unknown future lies before.
While, emblem of my happy hours with thee,
Behind me sinks the California shore!

XVII

SOBRE LAS OLAS

1.

As o'er the vasty deep we sail,
Through sultry calm, or whirling gale,
I dream of hill and bird and tree,
I dream, Egeria dear, of thee,
And aches my heart, and to my eyes
The bitter tears, uncalled, arise.

SEA-GRASSES

2.

Others have said these things before,
Others will say them evermore;
In every sphere of busy life,
In every age, to work or strife
Man goeth forth o'er land and sea,
And partings such as ours must be.

3.

Egeria, dear, beloved one,
Our refuge is in God alone;
When anguish wrings the stricken soul,
And blackness wraps it in its stole,
And almost seems it we must die,
Light—strength—balm come from Him on high.

XVIII

CARMENCITA

1.

Carmencita, Carmencita,
With thy ebon eyes and tresses,
And thy beauteous body rhythmic,
How can words of mine describe thee?

SEA-GRASSES

2.

Not art thou, O child of genius,
Like those smiling dolls mechanic,
Gauzy gymnasts of the ballet,
Who with infinite gyrations,
And with leapings acrobatic,
Strive to dazzle and astonish:
Not of these art thou, niñita,
If thou wert this voice were silent.

3.

When thou steppest out before us,
With that air Andalusian,
And the music sweetly tinkles,
Music of thy native hill-sides,
(List! the clack of castañetas)
And the welcome of the people—
Hands and voices—breaks around thee,
Then, O maid of Spain impassioned,
Doth thy spirit wake within thee:
Then, O thing with heart of fire,
Do the unseen genii seize thee,
Dwelling round us, o'er us, in us,
Deities of song and dancing:

SEA-GRASSES

Thee they seize, their favorite daughter,
And thou dancest at their bidding:
Mystic hands and voices urge thee:
Yea, for gods and men thou dancest,
Carmencita, Carmencita!

4.

Hark! the hundred-handed plaudits
Of the people echo round thee:
Beauteous mænad, wildly driven
By the torrent of thy passion,
On its rhythmic waters tossing,
Now in pose moresque thou pausest.

5.

Ah, though voice of mine may praise thee,
Yet this pen can never paint thee,
Paint thy sweet voluptuous fury,
Spirit of the dance incarnate,
Carmencita, Carmencita!

New York,
July, 1890.

SEA-GRASSES

L'ENVOI

1.

Not the sweet solitude which poets love
Of sylvan home, set on some sunny knoll,
By gently-flowing stream; or in some dell
Sequestered, with bird-voices welling song
At morn and eve; where from the peering eyes
Of men shut off, and roar of the great world,
Year after year, uninterruptedly,
Works the rapt bard at his allotted task;
Not this sweet solitude, though much desired,
Not this sweet isolation has been mine:
But, up till now, ocean in sun and storm,
Where sometimes proudly speeds the ship, sometimes
Stands struggling for her life with the fierce gale,
While waves bestride her decks, and round her sing,
Like furies in their flight, the frenzied winds:
Not constancy of the oak, rooted in one spot,
But change kaleidoscopic, broken bits
Of life in foreign lands, these have been mine:
My home the round earth and the world of men.

SEA-GRASSES

2.

Yet loves my soul this life: for through me runs—
Though grown less masterful in its long detour
Down urban generations, of the sail
And oar and helm forgetful—a viking vein,
A passion for the world-encircling wave,
From some Norse sire, whose galley was his home,
Some rider of the deep blue water drawn,
Blue-eyed, flavicomous; and within me lives,
Like sea-bird caged within a city room,
A secret wildness that will not be tamed,
An instinct from the Baltic and the Fiords.

3.

Thus double-natured, loving diverse lives,
Man halts: God in his wisdom sets the task.

4.

But who, ye Muses, who that hath beheld
Your shapes celestial, and your eerie song
Heard, that divine enthrallment hath escaped
Which visits those who on your beauty gaze?
Like is that man to one of Bacchus' slaves
Who once hath tasted Helicon's bright draught.

SEA-GRASSES

In dreams he hears the circling sisters sing,
And seeks to re-enter that divine abode.
The nympholepsy of the seer o'ertakes him:
Seizures henceforth, weird trances are his doom.
Not in this world, but in that mystic other,
His spirit—oft returning—finds its joy.
As pale Chinese, or Hindoo haggard-faced,
Each in his drug surcease of sorrow seeks,
Poppy or hasheesh, so the poet, dazed
By voices sweet from the empyreal air,
Leaves all things for the Muses' magic cup.

THE WAIFS



PRELUDE

Ye waifs, which up till now have had no home,
Some born in youth, in grizzled manhood some,
Here enter and, at last, a sheltered nook
Find, each of you, within this little book.



I

MARGARET

Here, in the north, the golden-rod
Covers each hill-side, Margaret;
I love it; but my dreams still set
Toward the rare garden which we trod

Together on that long June night.
There blew the jasmine sweet; there sang
The mocking-bird; there plaintively rang
(As faded from the world day's light)

The whip-poor-will's half-human cry.
Would I could see once more that home!
Would I could clasp—no more to roam—
Thy fair hands, Margaret! As fly

The birds of summer south, so wing
My thoughts their flight toward thee. Though land
And sea I cross, thou hold'st a wand
Which to thy side my spirit can bring.

Philadelphia,
October, 1878.

THE WAIFS

II

AN ADRIANA

(Miss Kate Forsythe in the Comedy of Errors.)

A gentle, patient, loving wife,
She moves among the merry scenes,
Where none knows what the other means,
And blunders fill the stage with strife.

At each Antipholus oft we smile,
And the two Dromios wake our laughter,
But Adriana haunts us after
Master and man no more beguile.

Her naiad face, her classic air,
Elizabethan half, half Greek,
Her tuneful voice, so wifely-meek,
Make up an impersonation rare.

Sweet dame, for thee was writ this play,
The woman Shakspeare drew, thou art;
The fair creation of his heart
Embodied in our later day!

New Orleans, Louisiana,

February 19, 1879.

THE WAIFS

III

IN THE CHINA SEAS

Once, lying in my berth at night,
What time I sailed the China Seas,
There came, like thought of future ease
To him who wearies of the fight,

A dream of home. Far from the din
Of wind and wave my spirit flew.
What mattered how the typhoon blew?
I saw the city of my kin—

Its rivers twain. O native land!
O Pennsylvania meadows sweet!
O lanes where once with youthful feet
I walked or, musing, long would stand!

You must I love! Toward northern sky
The needle turns, where'er we roam;
So turns the wanderer's heart toward home:
You must I love until I die!

December, 1879.

THE WAIFS

IV

CAIRO

Cairo, to sing thy gardens fair,
When shines the moon, now give me wit.
For where is night more exquisite?
Or pleasure more alluring where?

I sip the sherbet's cooling draught,
Which in this fervid clime belongs;
And to my ears the plaintive songs
Of Araby the breezes waft;

And while the evening later grows,
And grow the hours of pleasure ripe,
Forth from the nargile's bubbling pipe
I draw contentment and repose.

And Cairo, if to thoughts of love
Prompts the warm heart, what spot like thee?
On such a night came Antony
By Nile with his sweet queen to rove!

Cairo, Egypt,
May, 1883.

THE WAIFS

V

DANCING GIRLS

Welcome once more, ye dancing forms
That do intoxicate my soul!
Your beauty is a magic bowl
Whose draught my weary spirit warms.

Forward and backward, round and round,
Like nymphs Arcadian on the lea;
Naught but the rhythmic dance I see,
I hear naught but the music's sound.

The music's sound, the rhythmic dance,
The happy faces flushed, the feet
Time keeping to the music's beat,
The lovely limbs, the tender glance!

O what more beautiful than this?
Than maidens in the mazy dance?
A draught it is that doth entrance
My soul: delight's elixir 'tis!

Cairo, Egypt,
May, 1883.

THE WAIFS

VI

PHYLLIS

A nimbus doth thy form exhale,
Like that which, in the days of old,
Each god and goddess did infold;
Its light surrounds thee like a veil;

It draws me to thee from afar;
I am the needle, thou the pole;
Thou art my yearning spirit's goal—
Alpha, the bright and guiding star.

Thou art my yearning spirit's goal;
Thy face for all my ills is balm;
Thy voice, thy hand, alone, can calm
The perturbations of my soul.

I seek the crowded city's press,
Still dost thou haunt me, beauteous shape;
I slumber, but can ne'er escape
The glamour of thy loveliness.

THE WAIFS

My eyes see naught—below—above—
But thee; I hear naught but thy voice;
Sweet nymph, I love thee not from choice;
Because I cannot help, I love.

And would I put thee from me even
The plaudits of the wise to earn?
Ah, does a mortal backward turn
When open stand the gates of Heaven?

O Love; thou, thou alone art life!
Without thy blisses earth would be
A charmless desert; but with thee
Sweet Paradises here are rife.

VII

JULIUS CÆSAR

Thou demi-god of Rome, whose fame
Down twenty centuries comes to me,
How burns my soul to be like thee
Whene'er I hear thy mighty name!

THE WAIFS

Fades Shakspeare; fade those kings of song,
Blind Homer, Milton the divine,
The Mantuan and the Florentine.
Allures no more that laureled throng.

Them I revere, but thee I love,
O Julius, this the spirit's truth,
Who, pale and dissolute in thy youth,
In manhood the strong world didst move.

Yes, thee I love, thou rulest my thought,
Great Master of both pen and sword;
Better than any written word,
The act to which the dream is wrought.

1883.

VIII

IN PARIS

I stood in Paris at the tomb
Of him who crossed the bleak Alps' ridge,
And charged o'er Lodi's bloody bridge,
Till Europe heard his cannons' boom:

THE WAIFS

Who made the haughty Hapsburg yield,
Who watched the flames from Kremlin's tower,
Who Elba fled, but fell from power
On Waterloo's tremendous field.

He was a dreamer in his youth,
His eyes were dull, his face was pale;
But, knowing no such word as fail,
He wrought his visions into truth.

Second alone to him of Rome
He sits within the halls of fame;
His glory France's, though he came,
A Cæsar, from the Cæsars' home.

Paris, France,

1883.

IX

MUSIC

1.

His light baton the leader waves,
The violinist draws his bow,
And round me streams of music flow,
Wherein my joyful spirit laves.

THE WAIFS

2.

O dulcet sounds! Well can I tell
That born ye were in Italy;
Whose tuneful measures have, for me,
A sweetness inexpressible.

3.

O dulcet sounds, upon whose wing
My spirit mounts to other sphere,
Is it a choir divine I hear,
And angels that in rapture sing?

4.

Ye seize my soul in swift embrace,
And bear it from the things of earth;
A being of celestial birth
Am I, with Heaven my dwelling place.

1883.

THE WAIFS

X

IN HARBOR

O sea, I praise thy broad expanse
Because thou art the world's highway,
And, treading thee, I reach Cathay,
Japan, the Indies, England, France!

Thou art the means unto an end,
For this I seek thy waters blue,
But never came betwixt us two
That faith which fastens friend to friend.

He who, seduced by thy caress,
Would trust thee, knows thee none too well,
Now fair as Heaven, now fierce as Hell,
Ocean, thy name is fickleness.

Dearer by far it is to me
To wake at dawn 'midst twittering birds,
And crowing cocks, and lowing herds,
Than on thy restless waves, O sea!

July, 1883.

THE WAIFS

XI

TO EROS

O thou accustomed to Olympian air,
Who sett'st at naught the little laws of men,
Thou fairest of the nectar-drinking gods,
Great Eros, is it strange I swell thy train?

Thou art the sun which doth illume our world;
For when thou risest on our sight, behold!
Light breaks around us, and the songs of birds,
Singing, as if in Paradise, we hear.

Thou art the moon and we are like the sea;
For thou dost charm each restless spirit on
At thy sweet will, as does the moon the sea,
Or lead it back to its allotted place.

Thou art the star which shinest on our lives
Like that of Bethlehem on the Magi old;
None other is like thee, and at the sight
We leave all else and follow where thou movest.

1889.

THE WAIFS

XII

THE WALTZ

1.

When in my arms thou retest,
As round we go, and round,
(Like some sweet bird thou nestest,
Lulled by the music's sound,)
When in my arms thou dreamest,
As round and round we go,
Egeria, dear, thou seemest
A spirit here below.

2.

So light thy every motion—
Thy step that follows mine—
Oh on some fairy ocean
We seem to float, divine!
Would it might cease, ah never,
This music's passionate sound!
Would we could waltz forever,
Together, round and round!

1898.

THE WAIFS

XIII

ARMS AND THE MAN

Lines written on the first anniversary of the battle of Manila Bay, May 1, 1899. Admiral Dewey was then preparing to return to the United States, and sailed for home May 20.

1.

Hail the great Admiral! Hail him who came,
One year ago, into this tropic bay,
Conquistador from out the far-off north,
And homeward now departs! Hail and farewell!

2.

One year ago! As on the cruiser's deck
By night I sit, and watch thy broad expanse,
Manila Bay, lit by the moon's pale beam,
What dreams are mine! What visions of the Past!

3.

The flag of Spain above Cavité's forts!
The fleet of Spain in battle's stern array!
The dark gray ships that, on that morn in May,
Out of the north, like phantom galleys, came,
And smote to death the fleet and forts of Spain!

THE WAIFS

Corregidor beheld them as they passed
In single, silent file—Olympia leading,
Baltimore, Raleigh, Petrel, Concord, Boston—
The immortal six: Corregidor beheld them
Advancing like the messengers of Fate,
Prescient, inexorable—the vanguard
Of great America, in southern seas
Her destiny imperial fulfilling:
Corregidor beheld them as they passed—
The Angles and the Saxons sailing on!

4.

Once more the Northman with the Southron strove,
Once more the viking, as in days of old,
Crossing the dark blue ocean, seized his prey
Ere yet that prey had deemed the eagle near.

5.

The months of war which followed: or with Spain,
Or crafty Aguinaldo's dusky hordes:
The dark gray ships on guard; the long search-lights
Stretching across the bay: ever and anon
The signals red and white from mast-head hanging
Like fiery constellations in the sky.

THE WAIFS

Now, as the fierce Tagals our lines assault,
The boom of Charleston's or Monadnock's guns
Proclaims the battle on: now, like a wave,
Wild, irresistible; or like a troop
Of tawny lions (so, methinks, they seem,
All clad in stout kahkee) our soldier-lads—
By Otis, Lawton, brave MacArthur led—
O'erwhelm the Malay, and Malolos falls.
Now Aguinaldo flies. Thus passed the days—
Thus passed the nights—in fair Manila's bay:
Thus passed a year which held a century's tasks—
A year which wrought a century's change: at last
"Come home," his country signaled him, "Well
done!"

6.

Hail the great Admiral! Hail him who came,
One year ago, into this tropic bay,
Conquistador from out the far-off north,
And homeward now departs! Hail and farewell!
U. S. S. Baltimore,
Manila Bay.

THE WAIFS

XIV

THE POET AND HIS DOGS

1.

Come on, my dogs! Come Sandy, Mozambique,
Dick! 'Tis the hour of our outing. Come along
Old Sherry, slow with weight of years, but still
Eager for a ramble, collie tried and true.
I know a vale where runs a purling stream,
Cool—clear as crystal; aye you know it too;
Our favorite haunt. Thither to-day we'll hie.
The forest calls! Come on, my dogs! Away!

2.

Like sentinels great oaks and chestnuts guard
This valley. From the surging throngs of men
Far off it lies, by rolling meadows fair
Surrounded—rolling meadows interspersed
With bits of ancient woodland yet unhewn.
The resting place this of my dogs and me.
Our favorite haunt. In spring's melodious days,
In midsummer's long-lingering afternoons,
In pensive autumn, and in winter bleak,
Always our favorite—always beautiful!

THE WAIFS

3.

Like Beavor's vale to the first Quaker (who
There tarrying, heard the apocalyptic voice)
This vale secluse to me: a sacred spot,
A sylvan fane, where to the ears of him
Who heeds them mystic voices oft-times come—
Voices from out the world invisible,
Onward and upward ever leading us.
To-day these mystic voices seem to preach
A sermon old, yet new, perchance, to some:
Its theme sublime—the unity of life,
The kinship, hence, of all created things.

4.

One spirit vivifies all nature! One
Spirit eterne man, beast and plant inspires!
One spirit dwells within my human frame,
And the lithe organisms of these, my dogs,
And the great body of this old oak tree!
One and the selfsame spirit animates,
From lowest to highest, all created things!
Source of all life, from whom, by whom we live!

THE WAIFS

5.

One spirit through a myriad different forms—
Past, present and to come—made manifest!
One spirit working through the æons! One
Essence celestial, ceaseless energy,
Onward and upward ever leading us,
Ever evolving, here upon this earth,
New types and higher, of which the last is man!
Man, marching at the front: creation's lord:
Lifted from out the ranks of his own kind
To be the leader up the long ascent:
Himself led by that Spirit which leads all.

6.

If the last type is man, what was the first?
What ancestry is his, stretching far back
Into the unknown beginnings of our earth?
What forbears fierce, less human than my dogs,
Were his? What dwellers in the landless sea?
What saurian shapes implacable? What form
Was it, in latter days evolved, which served
As joint forefather of my dogs and me?

THE WAIFS

7.

For as, oft-times, to one of humble birth,
Who lifts himself to high estate, still cling
Instincts and habits of his lowlier past,
So to my frame corporeal still cling
Vestiges of that lowlier life of old;
And deep within my soul, as in an abyss,
Echoes I hear of the world eocene—
Cries inarticulate—love, hatred, joy—
Cries of the creature primitive, untuned
To the conventions of our ordered sphere.

8.

Aye, this the truth the mystic voices preach
Here in this vale sequestered: "Of one blood
Are all earth's creatures: quickened by one life."

9.

Why then do narrow theologians give
To me a soul immortal—to my dog
Naught but a fleeting breath? One spirit—one
Eternal essence doth inform us both.
If I a soul possess then so does he.
We are, methinks, like lamps of different shapes

THE WAIFS

Fed by one central fire. The loftier I,
The lowlier vessel he. In me the flame
Burns, peradventure, with more dazzling sheen
Than in my dog, but 'tis the selfsame fire.
A difference in degree it is, not kind.

10.

When from its earthly dwelling place the soul
Ebbs, whether man's or dog's, and what we call
Death parts the spirit from the moldering clay,
Whence goes that soul? Will we, to some new world
Transferred, retain our own identity,
I and my dogs, and, reunited there,
Wander together in Elysian Fields,
Comrades, as in the pleasant paths of earth?
Or will the soul into infinitude,
Into the deep from whence it came, recede;
And, merged within that spiritual sea,
Await re-birth into another form?
Who knows? The door is closed beyond the grave.

11.

And thou, old oak, who for a hundred years
Hath battled with the storm, and greater grown

THE WAIFS

Through battling; when thy last hour shall have come,
And all bereft of life lies this vast frame,
Whence will have gone the spirit resolute
Which from a tiny acorn raised thee up
To what thou art, and now in thee abides?
Wilt thou, too, greet me in another world?

12.

Come on, my dogs! Come Sandy, Mozambique,
Dick, Sherry old! The sun hath set: the moon
Rises in the east: gray shadows fill the vale.
Home let us wander o'er the dusky hills!

Overbrook, Pennsylvania,

1904.

XV

SONNET

Once more the trees are tipped with vernal green,
Once more the robin from the branches sings,
Once more the violet in the fields is seen,
And in the woods flutter the blue-bird's wings,
Once more the golden dandelions fill
The meadow as the stars do fill the sky,

THE WAIFS

And wander I once more wood, dale and hill
As oft I wandered in the days gone by.
It is the month when my dear mother died—
Sweet April! Aye, it is the very day
When, while her children wept her couch beside,
Her gentle spirit passed from earth away.
Sad April! Looking back across the years
Once more my eyes are filled with mourner's tears.
Overbrook,
April 19, 1909.

XVI SONNET

What weather loves my soul the best? What day
Doth strongest to my spirit make appeal?
Is it a sky of blue, or scud of gray,
Which doth of my affection bear the seal?
Fair is the summer's day, the cloudless sky,
When o'er the mead the gentle zephyrs run,
And from his azure dwelling place on high,
All unobstructed shines the golden sun.

THE WAIFS

That day I love. Aye, who doth not? And yet
Another wakes in me a joy more deep;
When leaden are the skies, the woodlands wet,
And from the dark north-east the winds do sweep.
Methinks, long centuries back, in Scandia old,
Such weather bred my roving forbears bold.

Overbrook,

• *May, 1910.*

XVII

THE WOOD

Belovéd wood! Thou barrier green!
Thou leafy wall, through whose fair gates
I pass into a realm serene!
What joy within thy boundaries waits!
The world of men I leave behind,
Behind me now my troubles fall,
And comes the influence o'er my mind
Of these great shapes, so calm and tall.
The oak, the chestnut and the beech
Upon me now their blessings lay,
Rest and tranquillity they teach—
“Be one of us,” they seem to say,

THE WAIFS

“Forget the storm, the stress, the strife,
Share with us our serener life.”

*Overbrook,
June, 1910.*

XVIII

AUTUMN

1.

The russet field, the leafless tree,
The wood so still and lone,
The night which darkens o'er the lea
Ere noon is scarcely gone,

2.

The dead leaves drifting here and there,
Once young and fresh were they—
Aye, autumn 'tis which chills the air,
And clips the wings of day.

3.

The dead leaves rustling under foot,
As through the grove I pass—

THE WAIFS

It seems but yesterday they put
Their green buds forth, alas.

4.

It seems but yesterday since spring
Clothed field and wood with green,
And everywhere the birds did sing,
And budding life was seen.

5.

Then April waved his magic wand,
And blossomed beauteous May.
November now stalks o'er the land,
And somber is the day.

6.

Gone is the golden summer time,
So beautiful to see,
The sun within another clime
Now wakes the sleeping lea.

7.

Soon fly the winds of winter forth,
On pinions dark they go.

THE WAIFS

Soon comes the tempest from the north,
And falls the eddying snow.

Overbrook,

November 28, 1910.

L'ENVOI

Farewell ye songs, long waifs without a home,
Some born of joy, of brooding sorrow some,
Here now I'll leave you, each within his nook,
Safe 'twixt the covers of this little book.



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